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ABSTRACT

This guidebook addresses community change to improve the well-being of children and youth through neighborhood and consumer participation and involvement in constructing services and supports required to ensure sound futures for their communities. The guide discusses a four-step strategy for connecting with neighborhoods to strengthen community collaboratives: clearly define purposes and objectives, make connections with the neighborhood, work to move responsibility and authority to the neighborhood level, and recognize and value diversity and conflict. The guidebook begins with a brief rationale for the relevance of neighborhood mobilization and how it fits as a vital part of the work of community reform efforts. Next are discussions of key ideas and the steps involved in putting the ideas into practice. The guidebook concludes with 12 appendices, including the concept of community and neighborhood, definitions of social capital, a ladder of citizen participation, obtaining resident views, an annotated bibliography of mapping community strengths, the nature and potential of community organizing, hiring community workers, government's role in building social capital, citizen monitoring, involving residents, cultural democracy and power sharing, and Healthy Start initiatives. (JPB)

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A Matter of Commitment

Community Collaboration Guidebook Series

PS 027405

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Getting to the Grassroots:

Neighborhood Organizing and Mobilization

Charles Bruner and Maria Chavez

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About the Guidebooks

Over the past decade, there has been a dramatic growth in the creation of community collaborations to design and implement new service approaches for children, youth, and families to better address individual, neighborhood, and community needs. Many of these community collaborations have become very sophisticated in their work, learning and expanding their vision as they go forward.

Many began primarily as collaborations of service providers -- involving organizations and agencies providing health, education, and human services. Increasingly, however, such collaborations have moved beyond a strictly service approach, recognizing that they must involve the entire community to succeed and that they must address economic and social as well as human capital development needs.

As collaborations seek to improve child, youth, and family outcomes on a community level, they inevitably recognize the complexity, as well as the importance, of their task.

In 1994, three organizations -- the Center for the Study of Social Policy, the Child and Family Policy Center, and the Family Resource Coalition of America -- came together with the hope of combining our experiences in the field into something that would be useful to community collaborations seeking comprehensive change. The Center for the Study of Social Policy initiated this work a part of its Improved Outcomes for Children project. The Academy for Educational Development/Center for Youth Development and Policy Research provided guidance and support to us in recognizing the importance of youth development and involvement.

Organizing our experiences and the knowledge we have gained has proved to be a challenge. We started from the premise that society can improve the well-being of its children, but to do so will require fundamental changes in the way communities (both their public and private systems) support and serve children, youth, and families. The work over the last decade represents a base upon which to build.

If we are to impact the current sobering outcomes and trends threatening our children and our society, however, the next decade will require both a broadening and a deepening of these reform efforts. We will have to break new ground to succeed.

Our experience tells us that the changes needed to improve the well-being of children, youth, and families are broad-reaching and involve three complementary and interrelated elements:

1. Effective services and supports that reach out to and connect with children, youth, and families;

2. Community and economic development that provides opportunities for sustaining and supporting families through employment within all neighborhoods in the community; and

3. Neighborhood and consumer participation and involvement in constructing those services and supports and other conditions required to ensure sound futures for children and communities.

This requires changes on many levels. In the end, we sought to arrange our knowledge base about successful reform efforts into different subject areas. While the goal is to produce a comprehensive guide, the different subject areas also lend themselves to separate publication, represented by this series of Guidebooks.

These Guidebooks share a common format. Each Guidebook begins with a brief rationale for the relevance of the subject area and how it fits as a vital part of the work of a community collaboration seeking comprehensive reform. Next is a discussion of the key ideas embodied in the subject, followed by a discussion of the steps involved in putting the ideas into practice. Finally, the appendices contain additional related materials for further discussion of the subject.

These subject areas, of course, are not discrete. They overlap and interconnect. The back cover of this Guidebook provides a brief description of all the proposed chapters for the comprehensive guide and identifies which ones currently are available in Guidebook form.

The National Center for Service Integration Clearinghouse is responsible for editing and publishing these Guidebooks. The preparation of the Guidebooks has been supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

The three sponsoring organizations are excited about the work of community collaborations across the country. We believe that this work holds the best promise for truly addressing the needs of our children, youth, and families. As the adjoining page suggests, we believe it is a matter of commitment and now is the time for action.

Center for the Study of Social Policy
Child and Family Policy Center
Family Resource Coalition of America

A Matter of Commitment: Making the Case for Reform

1. **Things are getting serious.** Current systems fail too many children, youth, and families, and trends in child well-being are deteriorating. This places increasing numbers of children, youth, and families at risk and weakens society as a whole.

2. **We know what works (but we are doing it only at the margins).** The country abounds with promising programs, services, and strategies that are helping children, youth, and families succeed. They embrace new principles of effective practice and emphasize neighborhood-based approaches that build local systems of support, but have had little effect on a community level. In part, this is because these efforts are being implemented only on a small scale and at the margin, without transforming larger public system responses.

3. **Implementing what works at the community level requires changes in all systems.** Isolated programs, services, and supports fight against the odds to help children, youth, and families. All systems must change and respond according to new principles of effective practice, including such mainstream systems as education, health services, and the array of human services and incorporating housing, job training, and economic development activities.

4. **Everyone has a stake and a responsibility.** Achieving success at a community level requires new partnerships and collaborations -- within and across public systems, at all levels of government, in publicly-financed services and in voluntary community organizations. Most importantly, it requires involvement of the youth and families whose futures are most at stake. The diversity of perspectives within the community need to be represented in the decision-making process. The business community and the faith community, as well as many other interests, need to support and help guide the work. Every part of the community has a stake and a role to play.

5. **We can succeed; it's a matter of commitment.** Although the path to success is still being cleared and constructed, the journey is not hopeless. It is simply a matter of sustained commitment to achieve that success. Moreover, there is no other way to get to where we need to go. A small but representative group of truly committed people can build the commitment needed among others for the journey. The time to start is now.

About the Authors

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How this Guidebook Fits with the Vision

This Guidebook directly addresses the third change described in the introduction as needed to improve the well-being of children and youth:

> *Neighborhood and consumer participation and involvement in constructing those services and supports and other conditions required to ensure sound futures for their children and communities.*

Community collaboratives often begin from a service base, with strongest representation from the professional service community of educators, health, and human service administrators and staff, and from policy makers with particular interests in these areas. To be effective, however, collaboratives need to broaden their perspective and their base — both to develop effective and appropriate strategies and to establish the trust needed to connect those efforts with other neighborhood reform activities.

Two of the most important aspects of the work that community collaboratives need to undertake are to:

- Commit to supporting grassroots organizing and capacity building as an essential component of reform, and

- Approach neighborhoods, particularly disinvested neighborhoods, in a partnering manner that respects and responds to resident needs, builds upon resident assets, and works to achieve resident goals.

The benefits of having strong neighborhood systems of support for reform efforts is generally clear. What often is not understood, however, is that these systems of support can only be established "with," and not "to," a neighborhood. Ultimately, this requires that collaboratives view consumers, and neighborhoods, in a fundamentally different light -- recognizing that representatives from disinvested neighborhoods are just as much the "change agents" for reform as collaboratives may view themselves.

Key Ideas

Increasingly, community efforts to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families recognize the importance of place and the need to develop and implement some of their strategies on a neighborhood, as opposed to a community-wide, basis. This is especially important where there are wide differences across neighborhoods in a community with respect to ethnicity, culture, class, opportunity, and the current outcomes being experienced by children.

Moreover, this often is based upon a recognition of the concentration of child and family need within certain neighborhoods. In this chapter, the terms "disinvested," "distressed," and "disenfranchised" will be used to refer to these neighborhoods.

It is important to recognize these needs within disinvested neighborhoods. It also is essential to recognize the assets and strengths within these neighborhoods and to understand that many of the needs arise because of current imbalances in those neighborhoods' access to the resources and power existing in the larger community. Taking a neighborhood-based approach ultimately involves sharing some of those resources and that power.

Many of the issues that need to be addressed in developing a neighborhood approach require that the overall community governance and management of the collaborative include strong neighborhood-based representation, with diversity reflected on community-wide policy and management boards. A community collaborative's decision-making structure should model active neighborhood participation and

should engage residents in identifying the vision, needs, goals, perspectives, and strategies undertaken by the collaborative. This process of engagement ensures that reforms carry the imprint of the neighborhood's interests.

This emphasis upon neighborhood involvement and neighborhood-based services does not mean that neighborhoods should be required to manage all public activities and services. Some services, supports, and strategies can most effectively be administered and implemented at the overall community level. Advanced medical services, including tertiary care hospitals, for instance, are needed by all residents in a community; but delivery of those services does not need to be provided within or under the direction of each neighborhood. What is important is that all neighborhoods have access to those services when they need them, and that they be provided in a manner that is respectful of their needs and cultures. When decisions are made or services delivered at the community, state, or federal level, however, it is critical that the neighborhood voices not be disenfranchised in those decisions.

In short, developing a neighborhood-based strategy does not mean that all authority and responsibility should be "devolved" from the community to the neighborhood level. The challenge in "devolving" authority is to place discretion, responsibility, and accountability where it can most appropriately and effectively be exercised -- while guaranteeing the enfranchisement of all in decision-making at all levels.

Community collaboratives which embrace this philosophy and approach must structure themselves to include a combined cadre of neighborhood residents and public and private staff. This is needed to develop a true spirit of community that represents the diversity within that community. If community collaboratives are to arrive at this spirit of community and develop neighborhood, as well as community-wide, strategies, they must take the following actions:

- recognize the importance of neighborhoods and their role in developing strategies to improve child and family outcomes,
- identify the natural leaders, invite them to join the collaborative, and support them as they try out their skills, ideas, and gifts,
- build real and meaningful connections with neighborhood residents and leaders to develop these strategies, understanding the issues involved in neighborhood organizing,
- broaden their focus, where needed, to incorporate issues raised at the neighborhood level around housing, public safety, economic opportunity, and institutional racism,
- create participatory opportunities for residents to assume increasing authority over the management and delivery of services and strategies, and
- value diversity and resolve conflicts and tensions between neighborhood and community in working to improve outcomes for children and families.

In all these, a critical and essential element of building strong neighborhood systems is that community collaboratives must invite residents and neighborhood leaders to join as equal partners in reform efforts, recognizing that these residents and leaders hold the font of knowledge that is needed to bring about meaningful and lasting changes within their neighborhoods. This requires that collaboratives learn to work together with neighborhood representatives in building this partnership and see both as needed agents for producing those changes.

The Importance of Neighborhood:
Definition and Centrality to Reform

Researchers, philosophers, and reformers have spent considerable time and effort defining the terms "community" and "neighborhood," explaining how they differ from one another, and describing why "neighborhoods" are important to forming effective social policy. While there is no single, agreed-upon definition for either, most people make a distinction between local political jurisdictions and their boundaries (such as counties, cities, metropolitan districts, or school districts) and boundaries more defined by residents themselves. Often, the boundaries defined by residents relate to local service areas, particularly elementary school attendance areas, that they use on a regular basis.

In this guide, community is used to refer to the local political jurisdiction (and its boundaries) that is used by the community collaborative to define its overall territory. Neighborhood is used to refer to distinct (and not so distinct) areas within that community with which residents identify. While the boundaries of a community can be delineated concretely and remain relatively stable over time, the boundaries of neighborhoods are more subjective and can change dramatically as a consequence of population mobility and changes in underlying social, political, and economic conditions.

Susan Keller, a sociologist, defines neighborhoods in a way that also describes their importance. According to her definition, a neighborhood is a locality with the following:

Definitions of Terms

Community collaborative — A group of individuals, usually representing different backgrounds and fields, who come together and organize to address a concern regarding child, family, or neighborhood well-being that transcends any one organizational response.

Neighborhood — a geographic area with which individuals identify, based upon geographic boundaries, social networks, concentrated use of area facilities, and special emotional and symbolic connotations for the residents. Often, neighborhoods encompass natural boundaries around roads and rivers or elementary school attendance areas and generally constitute much smaller areas (with 2,000 to 10,000 residents a normal representation) than do communities.

Community — a geographic area established based upon political jurisdiction boundaries with some common local governance structure or structures over some resources designed to meet the needs of children and families. A community may be a county, a municipality, a school district, or a local political jurisdiction established with some authority over the planning or delivery of services, supports, and opportunities within its boundary. In the definitions provided here, while neighborhoods represent informal demarcations, communities represent formal demarcations which include responsibilities over some planning or implementation activities.

- physical boundaries
- social networks
- concentrated use of area facilities
- special emotional and symbolic connotations for its inhabitants.

Appendix 6-1, excerpt from Chaskin, The Ford Foundation's Neighborhood and Family Initiative

From a political perspective, Robert Chaskin emphasizes that the concept of neighborhood development is based upon the belief that neighborhoods share more than proximity: that "they are connected by a complex web of relationships, needs, priorities, and concerns" and, further, that they "recognize, or have the potential to recognize, their common concerns and that they have the ability to act upon these concerns as a unit."

Part of these definitions relates to physical boundaries and part relates to a sense of "identification," "belonging," or "cohesion." The latter is evidenced by the existence of what different researchers have called "primary services," "core concepts," "social mediators," "social buffers," "micro-systems," or "social capital." The latter term, "social capital," distinguishes this network of relationships and web of support from economic capital (jobs and economic opportunity), physical capital (roads, houses, and transportation systems), and human capital (aptitudes and skills within the populous). In fact, a neighborhood has a physical boundary and a configuration of economic, physical, social, and human capital.

Children and families living in neighborhoods with low levels of economic, physical, social, and human capital are at extreme risk of experiencing poor outcomes. By one

measure from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, 6% of this country's children live in disinvested neighborhoods with severely depleted economic, social, physical, and human capital. These neighborhoods contribute disproportionately to the "rotten outcomes" children experience.

The strategies for improving the outcomes for children in these neighborhoods requires the building of all types of capital. While individually-(or family-) focussed strategies can help build human capital, building social, physical, and economic capital requires a collective focus.

Appendix 6-2, excerpt from Brunier, Toward Defining Government's Role as Catalyst: Building Social Capital in Disinvested Neighborhoods

In short, while community collaboratives initially may focus upon building human capital through a variety of services and supports, strategies within disinvested neighborhoods require a broader focus — including economic opportunity, physical safety, and social networking. This represents a new and challenging role for government — linking the public with the private and the professional with the voluntary.

Beyond Achievement of Specific Collaborative Outcomes and Toward Neighborhood Ownership of Services

Any community collaborative supporting constructive change in a disenfranchised community must be open to receiving guidance from the neighborhood's residents. This means the collaborative must create a climate that: values neighborhood leaders as they help shape the direction for their involvement, provides them with training and resources (including funding), and encourages them to try their wings with consultive support. The illustration provided in Table 6-1 shows the benefits of such an approach.

Table 6-1
University of New Mexico Family Development Program

Although many staff have come and gone from the University of New Mexico's Family Development program, the community has prospered because parents helped to shape the direction for the work and they continue to live in the neighborhood.

In 1985, the Family Development program (FDP) was funded as a project in the South Broadway neighborhood within Albuquerque, New Mexico. The neighborhood had long carried the symptoms of a marginalized neighborhood, with no participatory involvement of its residents in identifying its vision, needs, or strategies in concert with the agencies working there.

Recognizing this lack of connection, the director of FDP proceeded to canvas the neighborhood, knocking on doors and establishing friendships with the residents. FDP entered the neighborhood by linking up with the Public Health nurse (the first interagency collaborative established) who did home visits to help parents with newborns. FDP engaged parents with the question: "How can we help?" The question generated many conversations since it immediately engaged parents in problem-solving around their needs and respected them as having strengths. Further, it emphasized that staff are not the "experts" regarding parent needs, goals, or vision.

This strategy helped the two agencies to identify some parent leaders who were eager to discuss program direction for the collaborative within the neighborhood. Eight parents came together to hold a series of discussions and from these meetings came a request and commitment to work together. Parents stressed that they needed preschool education for their young children and were willing to form a cooperative with FDP and the Health Department to this end. Eleven years later, FDP/Parents can look back with pride on their work. The program now boasts four preschools, an interagency collaborative of thirty organizations (housing, education, health, legal, jobs, loans, etc.), a Baby Amigo program (home visiting programs for families with infants through age three staffed by community sisters/moms who volunteer to mentor new moms), an after school program for children ages 5-12, a statewide training program, and a governance body of parents who help set direction for the continual evolution of the initiative. All these efforts were made possible through the partnerships established between community residents and participating agencies.

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Several neighborhood organizers stress the importance of political education and resident capacity-building that comes with community organizing. Rainbow Research emphasizes that:

> *In working to build an organization, leaders and organizers need to keep in mind that they are helping people learn lessons which will live long after a particular organization may be gone. ...*
>
> *The long range reality is that organizations don't last. If they do last, they change. The lessons learned by the people are frequently the most durable evidence of substantial change wrought through a practitioner's efforts.*

Fisher, author of "Let the People Decide: Neighborhood Organizing in America," emphasizes the role of organizer as interactive agent and catalyst:

> *The best organizer is not so much a leader as a catalyst. Organizers bring an ideology, skills, experience, and perspective to their work; they owe it to neighborhood people to share this with them openly and honestly. ... The craft is to do so in a democratic manner where organizers see themselves not only as catalysts and guides but also as recipients of knowledge, experience, and the strength of local people and their traditions.... In general, the lion's share of gains of neighborhood organizing rests not with tangible results but rather in the lives of the people who participate in them.*

Bill Slotnik calls for the need for a:

Redefined Role of Professionals. In the more effective organizations, professional competence and expertise is seen as a complement to community leadership, not a substitute for it.

These quotes emphasize the need for two things:

a. the development of participatory avenues within neighborhoods to foster leadership emergence and development, and

b. outside leadership melding with neighborhood leadership to create a spirit of community.

The first represents the type of work professionals and community collaboratives do to foster participation and leadership. The second is the way the collaborative and its representatives and intermediaries view their ongoing work within the neighborhood. The fullest expression of movement toward neighborhood-based services is when services are integrated into neighborhood life, and the distinction between professional within the collaborative and neighborhood is not drawn.

Much has been said about the manner in which community collaboratives involved in grassroots movements do or should participate in the work of neighborhood organizing. Typically, collaboratives are encouraged to facilitate meetings in which neighborhood residents and natural leaders can disclose their feelings about their needs, the way systems currently respond to them, and the changes they want to see to improve the lives of their families and children. As facilitators, collaboratives are advised to listen carefully to these thoughts, record them accurately, and ask questions

that help clarify the thoughts expressed.

As facilitator, however, the collaborative must not control the process and may need to remove itself from the discussion at some point. Neighborhood residents may feel more comfortable working separately at some times to process the information they receive and define their own goals. Sometimes, collaboratives see themselves primarily in this "catalytic" role.

Although collaboratives have been praised as "catalysts for change" in this manner, that is not a complete or entirely accurate description. The dictionary defines catalyst as "one that precipitates a process or event, especially without being involved in or changed by the consequences." To the contrary, community collaboratives should interact with neighborhoods and be changed and enriched as a result. Collaboratives bring a certain set of skills and knowledge to partner with neighborhoods, as do neighborhoods. Both partners contribute to the growth and development of the community as they strive to speak with a united voice. Essentially, each individual feels validated as a member of the community, since each has a sense that he or she is listened to, respected, and valued. The partners converge to form a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Although it is true that the neighborhood must lead some of its own work, collaboratives must complement and support that work. Moments of learning occur constantly as collaboratives and neighborhoods meld -- collaboratives not only give to the neighborhood, but also learn and take information from the neighborhood.

There are, of course, various starting points for involving residents. In the 1960's

Appendix 6-3, excerpt from Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation"

Sherry Arnstein described a "ladder of citizen participation" that reflects different levels at which the larger community can share resources and decision-making with neighborhood residents. While "input" or "consultation" may be a logical lower rung on the ladder, Arnstein stresses the need to move up the ladder -- to "partnerships," "delegated power," and "citizen control" -- to achieve the true benefits of participation. Confining involvement to the lower rungs ultimately means "co-optation," "marginalization," and "manipulation."

Putting Ideas Into Practice

Step 1: Clearly define purposes and objectives

One of the first questions community collaboratives ask regarding working in neighborhoods is how they can make contact with neighborhood residents and identify leaders within the neighborhood with whom they can work.

The first thing community collaboratives need to be clear on is what they actually are offering to neighborhoods. Is the intent to work with neighborhoods in defining needs, goals, and strategies? Is it to provide services for or to neighborhood residents in a more responsive, closer-to-home fashion? These represent two different approaches, which have been described, using different terms, quite similarly by two students of neighborhood organizing, Arthur Himmelman and Robert Fisher. These are shown in Table 6-2.

The "social work" or "community betterment" model focuses primarily on building human capital, much less on creating social capital, and scarcely if at all on securing economic and physical capital. Alternatively, the "political activism" or "community empowerment" model emphasizes social capital development, with a goal of securing needed economic and physical capital for the neighborhood.

In distressed, disinvested, and disenfranchised neighborhoods, both are needed, but the latter is absolutely crucial.

Table by Charles Bruner, CFPC, 1995
Sources: Fisher, Robert. *Let the People Decide: Neighborhood Organizing in America* (Updated Edition). New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994.
Himmelman, Arthur. *Communities Working Collaboratively for a Change*. Minneapolis: Himmelman Consulting Group, 1991.

Table 6-2
Contrasting Approaches to Neighborhood Development

Terminology (Fisher)	
Social Work	Political Activism
(Himmelman)	
Community Betterment	Community Empowerment
(Other)	
Service Collaboration Top-Down	Community Collaboration Bottom-Up
Emphasis	
Agenda, goals and outcomes defined by larger community — as minimum goals for all children and families and society's responsibility to achieve them	Agenda, goals and outcomes defined by neighborhood — what neighborhood wants and needs and what changes residents want in community institutions
Focus upon individual's needs — education, job training, access to health care, human services, child care	Focus upon neighborhood needs — safe streets, recreation options, adequate housing stock, job opportunities
Organization structure and leadership emphasizes gaining commitment for change from community leaders and professionals	Organization structure and leadership emphasizes building leadership capacity at grassroots to successfully push for change
Emphasis upon service reforms — making services more responsive to resident needs and concerns	Emphasis upon political power — addressing issues of institutional racism, decision-making control
Neighborhood input solicited	Residents govern agenda
Emphasis to help residents be better consumers of services	Emphasis to enable residents to operate services

One of the greatest barriers both to involving neighborhoods and to implementing neighborhood-defined reforms (where the neighborhood defines the type of program that will be provided) is that collaboratives often are limited in their capacity to redirect resources or change programs or resources that have specific guidelines or requirements. Sometimes, the types of programs that are under the collaborative's authority do not meet the needs or priorities of the neighborhood. This means that, in many instances, collaboratives are hard-pressed to respond to many important, and even essential, neighborhood needs. In such a situation, collaboratives still must use the programs they bring, because that is what they have to offer. This entry point, however, should be used to establish a process where the neighborhood is encouraged and supported to create new programs, shape new policies for funding, and enter into political and economic arenas to secure needed resources.

If collaboratives become creative and seek to open up ways to provide as much freedom as possible for neighborhood design of the resources the collaboratives control, they can begin to build true neighborhood involvement in program and service design and delivery. Sometimes, this process becomes the best learning tool to demonstrate effective reform strategies for disenfranchised populations. This increases the capacity and political power of the neighborhood and allows other issues to be addressed as the collaborative and neighborhood partnership evolves.

It is important for collaboratives to recognize that they may not be welcomed with open arms by neighborhoods. In fact, many neighborhoods have become distrustful, with good reason, of outside efforts to assess them and restructure services to them. Community representatives are likely to face some levels of resentment, anger, aloofness, and suspicion as they approach neighborhoods. Community collaboratives

may need to prepare their own members, as a prelude to making "first contact," mentally and culturally to experiencing very different reactions than they do in their usual contacts and works. The most important long-term allies within the neighborhoods may be individuals they have to win over.

Achieving this collaboration requires very clear statements of initial goals and purposes by the community collaborative, along with a real commitment to involve, listen, learn, respond, and adjust.

Step 2: Make connections with the neighborhood

There are many issues involved in making connections with neighborhoods, five of which are discussed below: (2.1) creating a beginning base — identifying existing and nascent leadership; (2.2) listening to and learning what residents want and need — and being honest about what you are there to do; (2.3) identifying neighborhood assets and places where empowerment can begin; (2.4) recognizing current limits to self-actualization and building strategies to overcome them; and (2.5) examining how what those in the broader community are learning can enrich and change their current behavior.

2.1 Create a beginning base.

Generally, community collaboratives do not assume that affluent neighborhoods have a monolithic, easily identifiable, representative body of leaders who are driven by the same vision of that neighborhood's well-being. It is a disservice to disinvested and disenfranchised neighborhoods to assume that such a leadership structure exists

there, either. Collaboratives will encounter many types of leaders within neighborhoods. Some are driven by a vision of the overall neighborhood and community's well-being; some carry hidden agendas; some may have particular issues they hold dear and see above all others; some may be divisive or self-promoting. Many times, there are factions and schisms among various organizational leaders. Furthermore, some leaders from disinvested and disenfranchised neighborhoods initially will have to vent their own frustrations with collaborative leaders and community members who seem to represent the systems they feel oppressed them in the past (even when community members have a similar goal for systems change).

In addition, existing leadership, however well-meaning and well-liked, may feel overwhelmed with neighborhood needs and challenges. Churches may be a source of leadership, but congregations often do not adhere to neighborhood boundaries. Existing community-based organizations may work in the community, but again not reflect the class, race, or culture of those they serve. One lesson many organizers have learned is that existing leadership is seldom enough — new leaders must be identified and nurtured.

One first step is to meet with those leaders that can be identified and will meet, always with an eye toward identifying ways to expand the pool. In Rainbow Research's terminology, this can "secure the organization's invitation to the neighborhood."

The second step, which also begins the process of identifying neighborhood wants and needs, is (again in Rainbow Research's terminology) to "identify and cultivate successive generations of leaders" — through "kitchen table" and "front step" conversations. Table 6-3 provides excerpts from Rainbow Research's principles for

building community of these two points on making initial contact.

2.2 Listen and learn what residents want and need.

In building trust, community collaboratives need to be clear about what ways they are willing to work with neighborhood residents and what support they are capable of providing to the neighborhood. This can be an evolutionary process, but it is important that collaboratives recognize from the outset that neighborhood residents ultimately want the same things that all community members want — safe streets, adequate housing, decent jobs, access to health care, opportunities for positive social connections. They will not limit their focus for long to a service concern identified by the community collaborative, if any of these other needs are not being met. One of the first "lessons learned" by grantees of the National Healthy Start Initiative in working within disinvested neighborhoods to reduce infant mortality is worth quoting:

> *Do not assume the priorities of project leaders are necessarily the priorities of community members. In an area of high unemployment and inadequate housing, families may not see health care as a priority issue. These other issues must be dealt with before prenatal and pediatric care can be fully addressed.*

A collaborative reform agenda still can begin around a particular concern, but only if it is clear and acceptable to the neighborhood that this is a reasonable initial focus. It may, for instance, begin by seeking neighborhood support to develop strategies to involve parents in their children's schooling. This represents a "community betterment" or "social work" agenda — having defined the "problem" or "issue" it

Table 6-3
Principles Two and Three for Building Community

Secure the Organization's Invitation to the Neighborhood

An effective way to secure the initial invitation to the neighborhood is to organize a neighborhood committee to sponsor the organization. The committee would consist of people who represent recognized elements of the community. Key neighborhood people and groups should feel that they were informed and had the opportunity to participate.

A word of caution: do not rely too heavily on representatives from part of existing power structures, official or unofficial. Serious empowerment of neighborhood people will not be achieved if only the foxes are organized to guard the henhouse.

Identify and Cultivate Successive Generations of Leaders

Given access by the sponsoring committee's invitation, the real validation of the organization begins with the search for leaders. Kitchen tables and front steps typify the settings where leaders are found and where they begin to develop as leaders of the organization.

Kitchen table conversations. The "kitchen table" in question can mean the living room, the kitchen, even a person's office. What's important is that the conversation take place on their turf, in the place where they are most comfortable.

The conversation is active listening. Questions and answers are guided by the organizational task, but primarily you are there to listen to them. The reason for this is that as you listen, you hear possibilities. The cultivation of leadership begins as people are able somehow to rehearse the possibility of being effective and getting something done.

Front step conversations. Door knocking provides an excellent training ground for leadership and staff. Leaders not only meet and listen to the neighborhood. They also get to practice, on a one-to-one basis, verbalizing what the organization is and what it stands for. This clarifies their own understanding, and equips them to be advocates in other settings.

Source: McGinniss, Grace. *Prerequisites to Power: Six Principles for Building Community.* Rainbow Research, Inc. Minneapolis, MN. 1987.

wishes to address. As the case illustration in the Table 6-4 shows, it still is critical to engage residents to begin to address such a defined issue.

Table: Bruner, Charles, Karen Bell, Claire Brindis, Hedy Chang, and William Scarbrough. *Charting a Course: Assessing a Community's Strengths and Needs.* (1993)

Table 6.4
Yuba County, California

A major part of the Yuba County Coordinated Services Project is the development of school-linked services at two school sites. Over the last several years, the targeted schools have experienced a dramatic influx of Hmong children and families from Southeast Asia. The Hmong, political refugees from the Vietnam War, face the challenge of moving from a largely agrarian society to the highly industrialized United States. When Yuba's school-linked services efforts began, the initial planning group was at a loss on how to involve Hmong families. The families seldom came to school events, despite notes and telephone calls. Finally, one project planner decided to pay home visits to Hmong families, accompanied by two translators. During her visits she asked parents what activities would make attending a meeting worthwhile. One parent responded, "We would like to learn to make cupcakes." All too often, their children had asked their parents to make cupcakes for a school event or social activity, but they did knot know how. The planning group then sponsored a meeting about making cupcakes. They were overwhelmed by the response, and this event launched greater Hmong parent involvement in school. Planners never would have found a solution to involving Hmong families without going out and listening to the Hmong themselves.

The illustration shows the importance of involving the "consumer" whenever a collaborative develops new strategies. It may lead to the development of effective strategies that would not be discovered "from the top down." The illustration shows the power of "kitchen table" conversations.

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At the same time, these actions also open the door for residents to see "the possibility of being effective and getting something done." Community collaboratives will need to respond in some way to these expressions if they wish to sustain the involvement of these parents.

Some communities start by asking neighborhood residents to identify their problems, concerns, and needs. They start from the premise of "political activism" and "community empowerment." This can be done through a variety of "kitchen table" and "front step" conversations and using such techniques as focus groups and resident surveys.

The Urban Strategies Council in Oakland, for instance, hired and trained neighborhood residents to conduct "front step" interviews to gain resident views and make connections. This strategy has several benefits, including:

- reducing the distance between surveyor and resident to gain more candid views
- identifying additional neighborhood residents who might participate in activities
- helping surveyors hone their own communications skills
- providing people at least temporary jobs and work experience.

In short, it models the philosophy embodied within the community's reform agenda.

The caveat to such activities, however, is clear. If you ask residents what they want, you have to be willing to listen and respond to what they say. That does not mean a

collaborative has to respond immediately to all the demands it hears, but it has to show a willingness to open paths to address the concerns that are raised.

Community collaboratives must be ready to listen to charges of "institutional racism" and to engage in sometimes painful dialogue that seek common ground in working to redress old wrongs. The challenge to communities is not to have all the answers, but to maintain an openness and commitment to learn and work together — around the inevitable conflicts that will occur.

2.3 Identify neighborhood assets.

Neighborhoods rightfully have become suspicious of "outsiders" coming in to conduct an "assessment" that outlines and publicizes neighborhood deficiencies but does little to address them. While good baseline information is critical to charting progress over time, and helping learn what strategies are working and what are not, such neighborhood assessments can "disempower" and seem to "blame" as much as they can inform and guide.

Often overlooked are resources and assets within the neighborhood upon which strategies can build. John McKnight and others have sought to redefine the focus of community assessment — to searching for those resources and assets. This emphasis connects with building leadership by searching out people and organizations within the neighborhood who can serve as social mediators and sources of social, physical, and economic capital. Identifying these assets can occur through many avenues and at many locations -- at the laundromat, the Little League baseball diamond, the neighborhood medical clinic, a community restaurant, and/or through "kitchen table"

and "front step" conversations, provided the right questions and issues are raised and probed.

As with other activities, these assessments must be performed with, and not to or for, the neighborhood. Assessments require time and effort to conduct, but can produce a vision for what can, rather than what cannot, occur.

Appendix 6-5 - Description of asset mapping and annotated bibliography

2.4 Recognize limits to self-actualization and build strategies to overcome them.

Just as it is a disservice to neighborhoods to believe the capacity for rebuilding does not reside within the residents living there, community collaboratives should not view disinvested neighborhoods through rose-colored glasses. Collaboratives must recognize that neighborhoods need help and support — that empowerment requires skill-building and growth as much as it does a forum and a place at the decision-making table.

Appendix 6-6 - Conclusions from Fisher Let the People Decide

Achieving this goal requires a partnership, but initially some of the professional tools are likely to reside outside the neighborhood. Neighborhood residents do not have all the answers or resources — any more than the community holds the key. Residents have to be given the opportunity to compare and contrast their perspective and proposed solutions with those of the collaborative. The partnership must evolve; and initially, the community may "own" much of the technical expertise. Certainly, much of the language and "specialized expertise" around service domains largely is external to the neighborhood itself. Some of this hegemony from speaking a professional language can and should be dispelled immediately; but some is necessary to convey

information and knowledge. It should not be thrown out, but there should be a conscious effort to transfer this expertise to interested neighborhood representatives.

2.5 Examine how learnings can change and enrich personal practice.

Some of the most profound lessons will be those learned by community collaborative members from those within the neighborhood. While there may be a focus on what is happening within the neighborhood, the insights and understandings collaborative members acquire can be applied in many settings. In fact, neighborhood leaders and the experiential expertise they possess can help teach and inform those within the larger community new responses and actions. The dialogues and connections with the neighborhood provide settings for "adult learning" and "reflective practice" that must be recognized, supported, and highlighted.

Step 3: Work to Move Responsibility and Authority to the Neighborhood Level

3.1 Construct an explicit transitional approach.

Initially, many of the top administrative positions in reform activities may be held by those within the larger community, with a sensitivity to the neighborhood but not residing in the neighborhood. Similarly, needed professional expertise is likely to come from outside the neighborhood. If needed, "intermediaries" can be invaluable to create a starting point for building neighborhood capacity.

Many positions, however, can and should be filled by those within the neighborhood. They must offer experiences to learn and move to positions of greater administrative responsibility, but this will not occur without some support. Larner, Halpern, and Harkavy note that hiring paraprofessionals from within communities for direct service work is possible, but requires more attention to staff training and support. It may be no cheaper overall than hiring professionally-trained staff, but its advantage is the human capital it helps to build, as well as the contacts those paraprofessionals have within their neighborhood. Every attempt should be made to locate professionals who may already reside in the neighborhood and to recruit these individuals for high-level positions. Structurally, a career ladder should be developed to encourage upward mobility for neighborhood residents.

Appendix C: Excerpt from Lerner, Halpern, and Harkavy, "For Start for Children"

The expectations the community collaborative places upon the administrators or "intermediaries" also will help determine the course of reform. Community collaboratives need to be explicit in selecting and supporting these intermediaries to assume a transitional role for their own leadership.

The direction of moving from "community-based" (housed in the community where residents are encouraged to participate) to "community-managed" (residents are employers and help to set the direction for the evolution of the work) must be a part of an organization's mission, if that transformation is to occur. This emphasis requires much of the intermediary and as much internal attention to staff development as external attention to delivering services and supports. Most importantly, it requires that administrators and intermediaries believe firmly in the importance of training and developing neighborhood staff who eventually can take over their own jobs.

Neighborhood community centers, like in Sandtown-Winchester in Baltimore, have defined one of their roles as a hub of entrepreneurial activity, effectively acting as an incubator for human service entrepreneurs.

3.2 Develop many and varied ways to participate.

To build neighborhood capacity — for taking on positions of administrative and political leadership as well as creating networks of support — requires aggressive development of avenues for involvement.

With good common sense, Rainbow Research stresses that:

> *The more ways there are for people to get involved, the more people with different skills, interests, and commitments can find an opportunity to participate in and get involved with helping the neighborhood. ... Neighborhood groups have learned that interest won't be maintained for long if committee work is the only opportunity of involvement.*

Neighborhood work requires a variety of first-step opportunities for involvement — "kitchen table" and "front step" conversations, fix-up and clean-up drives, block parties, cultural celebration days, volunteer events, and "barter banks" for giving back for services that are received.

Appendix 6-B: Excerpt from Bruner, Toward Defining Government's Role as Catalyst

In turn, these first-step opportunities should be stepping stones for other levels of activity and recognition. Leadership paths begin with a first step of showing interest and accepting a simple task, a second step of a more concerted level of activity, and

subsequent steps leading to greater responsibility, initiative, and recognition. Community collaboratives can reflect on how their strategies create these ladders of opportunity, and whether these respond to the diverse interests of the neighborhood residents. Organizations can pay special attention to their Board development activities as a means for developing a leadership base. Citizen monitoring efforts can build the fiscal expertise that neighborhoods need to deal with fiscal issues and affairs.

Appendix 6-9: Description of citizen monitoring and annotated bibliography

Appendix 6-10: Excerpt from Rainbow Research, "Successful Neighborhood Self-Help: Some Lessons Learned"

Step 4: Recognize and Value Diversity and Conflict

The work of neighborhood development requires recognition and appreciation for diversity — in race, culture, custom, class, and political perspective. Conflicts and tensions will arise.

If these are to be resolved, it is important to agree the neighborhood is not "on trial." The community and neighborhood should not take the view that the path is clear, and that it is ultimately the job of neighborhood residents to make it work. The path is not clear; and the neighborhood cannot succeed without the larger community's support.

The task will involve continuous problem-solving and adjustment, trial-and-error. Success is based upon long-term commitment, not first level-plan.

Makungu Akinyela, in a monograph entitled "Diversity, Cultural Democracy, and the Family Support Movement," states that cultural diversity is a fact of life in American society today. Increasingly, the issue is not whether diversity should be accepted. The pressing issue for families, human service professionals, neighborhood leaders, and community collaboratives is how the power inequality across these diverse

Appendix 6-11: Excerpt from Akinyela, "Diversity, Cultural Democracy, and the Family Support Movement"

groupings will be challenged and addressed. On a practical level, this requires a rethinking of the design, development, and implementation of family support so that programs reflect the expression, values, and cultures of the neighborhoods they serve. Cultural democracy supports the human right of each group to have equal access to information and equal influence over policies, from their own cultural experience and in their own cultural voice.

Jerry Tello argues that professionals of color can play a role in this respect:

> *When families of color must depend on so much of their survival from authority figures who are not a part of their community, they receive a subtle message that the collective community is not capable of caring for itself and that they must in the end depend on outside help. On the other hand, when families see professionals who are from the community and who are caring about community issues, the message is that the community is coming together for its own. Professionals of color argue that this is important for the development of a sense of collective, community self reliance.*

Hedy Chang, Denise De la Rosa Salazar, and Cecelia Leong of California Tomorrow write,

> *An integral part of creating the conditions under which people from diverse communities can engage in a dialogue about their common interests is supporting the efforts of diverse groups to build a strong sense of identity within their own group. Too often efforts designed to strengthen the group consciousness of separate groups is viewed*

as the polar opposite of initiatives aimed at fostering understanding across groups in an integrated setting."

In family support programs and other services and strategies which practice this principle, identification with the larger community and its needs is recognized as a strength for families and their individuals in the family.

Throughout, misunderstandings and misperceptions of motives can arise, threaten progress, and create dissension. The only way to avoid misunderstandings is to communicate — which requires new language from representatives of both community and the neighborhood. Only by understanding each other's perspectives will real disagreements be brought to bear and real compromises and new consensus reached. Programs which have entered with this openness have experienced this need for new methods of communication and the rewards of this effort, as the "lessons learned" from Healthy Start indicate.

Appendix 6-12: Excerpt from "Healthy Start: Lessons Learned"

Summary of Steps. The table on the following page provides a quick summary of the steps and strategies described above.

Summary of Four-Step Strategy for Connecting with Neighborhoods

Step 1. Clearly Define Purposes and Objectives

Step 2. Make Connections with the Neighborhood

- 2.1 Create a beginning base
- 2.2 Learn what residents want and need
- 2.3 Identify neighborhood assets
- 2.4 Recognize limits to self-actualization and build strategies to overcome them
- 2.5 Examine how learning can change and enrich personal practice

Step 3. Work to Move Responsibility and Authority to the Neighborhood Level

- 3.1 Construct an explicit transitional approach
- 3.2 Develop many and varied ways to participate

Step 4. Recognize and Value Diversity and Conflict

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Appendix 6-1

The Concept of Community and Neighborhood

About this Appendix:

As communities seek to develop more "community-based" systems of support for families, definitions of what is a "community" or a "neighborhood" inevitably come up and must be addressed. While using specific terms differently than they are described in this Guidebook, the excerpt from Robert Chaskin explores the various issues that go into defining the concepts of community and neighborhood and the need to establish definitions in the context of the work being undertaken.

Source:

Chaskin, Robert. *The Ford Foundation's Neighborhood and Family Initiative: Toward a Model of Comprehensive, Neighborhood-Based Development.* Chicago, IL: The Chapin Hall Center for Children, 1992.

Excerpt:

Defining the Concepts

A host of definitional difficulties inheres in the terms "neighborhood" and "community." This is true both with regard to defining the attributes that characterize each concept and with regard to defining the physical and operational boundaries of any particular example.

We will not attempt to provide a single, broadly applicable definition for each of these terms. Rather, we will explore some of the elements inherent in the concepts and how they inform assumptions about the neighborhoods that are the units of action in NFI [Ford's Neighborhood and Family Initiative]. We will then explore some of the operational issues surrounding the definition of a particular neighborhood for a particular set of problems.

Erymologically, the term "community" carries with it a multitude of connotations and ideological implications: notions of a common identity and of common rights, privileges, activities, and responsibilities. (Cherkov-Yanoov 1986) To a large extent, the term neighborhood, which denotes spatial proximity, is free of these connotations. But it is clear that the units of action and analysis with which the NFI is concerned are believed to contain some of these communal aspects. Indeed, each local initiative under NFI has, in one way or another, described its mission in terms of *community action*. Thus, one site describes its initiative as a "community building project"; another puts forward a vision of fostering an "ideal community."

Communities have been conceived of both with and without a spatial referent. Religious communities, professional communities, and other communities of association are described as groups of individuals whose members share a sense of purpose. But, despite Alinsky's (1971) contention that "in a highly mobile, urbanized society the word 'community' means community

of interests, not physical community," the physical reality of the four NFI neighborhoods is essential to their definition for the purpose of the Initiative. While the NFI charter assumes some sense of common identity and common interests among neighborhood stakeholders, these elements are presumed to operate within an organizational structure based in a geographically bounded entity.

In most cases, the concept of the local community tends to describe a unit of substantial size and complexity, both larger and more inclusive than what is usually referred to as an urban neighborhood. One such model describes the community as a social system, a functional unit in which goods and services are provided and consumed, interpersonal relationships are created and maintained, participation in activities is shared, and the circumstances of local life are held in common. In this conception, the local community is seen as providing "the organization of social activities to afford people daily local access to those broad areas of activity that are necessary to day-to-day living." (Warren 1978)

Similarly, John McKnight speaks of community as "the social place used by family, friends, neighbors, neighborhood associations, clubs, civic groups, local enterprises, churches, ethnic associations, temples, local unions, local government, and local media." (McKnight, 1987) The geographic boundaries of such a set of associations, however, are hard to fix, especially because particular individuals may belong to various subsets of these associations, and may live at various distances from the loci of associational activity. Similarly, the boundaries by which formal organizations define their field of operation are unlikely to coincide perfectly.

Despite the complexity of these connections and the openness of the system, the local community is seen as a primary point of reference and a principal unit of belonging and action. The community is seen to provide some sense of identification and mutuality of circumstance for those who live there, as well as local access to a wide range of organizations, institutions, services, and activities.

The character and function of the local community are greatly influenced by the urbanicity of the community's setting, its size (both in terms of population and area), and the degree to which the catchment areas of services and organizations coincide with its boundaries. Variations in these factors also influences the relationships (spatial, organizational, and affective) between one community and another. Warren (1978) has developed a comparative framework whereby American communities can be compared along four dimensions: (1) the degree of local autonomy; (2) the coincidence of service areas; (3) the degree of psychological identification with the locality; and (4) the strength of the relation of various local units to one another (the "horizontal pattern").

The urban landscape, with which NFI is concerned, presents a particularly complex picture with regard to the number and proximity of different local arrangements, which can be seen as a "pyramid of progressively more inclusive groupings" (Suttles 1971). These groupings range from sets of informal relationships in a changing setting to ways of distilling smaller units of social identity and action from a larger social arena. The groups are all characterized by their partiality; the solidarity of each one is built upon a subset of issues relevant for the

performance of activities and the construction of identity in the local setting. They are all constructed in part by external forces (government, business, the media), and in part by internal forces. Internal forces include individual residents (through their personal interpretations of boundaries and connections) and local organizations seeking to ground themselves in an arena of action.

But the local community is not to be seen as a perfectly boundary-closed system. Unlike formal, special-purpose organizations, it contains within it smaller systems not necessarily rationally related to one another; it exists as part of larger systems, not in isolation; it is not centralized, and therefore its organization is implicit rather than formal; and it has a diverse range of needs and engages in a diverse range of activities (Moe 1959; Warren 1978).

Membership in a local community is variously constructed and not exclusive of membership in other systems. Members of the community are connected to each other not only as individuals, but also through associations with and membership in informal groups (family, peer groups, patrons, clients) and formal groups and institutions (school, work, religious congregations). These connections in turn link individuals to other and larger systems of activity and identification. The boundaries around this set of relationships can be fixed for heuristic purposes, but we must take into account a community's placement within a larger network of systems. The greatest concentration of relationships and associations, it is presumed, will exist within the borders of this unit, and such networks will "attenuate at its boundaries (Taub 1990), but they will not end there.

Defining the Unit

From the above exploration, several characteristics of the local community can be distilled. These include (1) a geographically bounded reality; (2) a set of functional attributes; (3) the existence of institutional and organizational elements; (4) the existence of informal networks of association; and (5) a sense of solidarity and common identity (both externally and internally defined).

A clearly defined, "ideal" community -- that is, a functionally and organizationally self-sufficient, physically and socially identifiable entity with a high degree of solidarity among residents -- is difficult to construct and maintain anywhere, and is non-existent in urban America. We must therefore explore communities heuristically, with reference to a particular problem we seek to solve. The priorities set by the problems at hand will in large part inform the degree to which one stresses any of these attributes. Similarly, the problem will in large part drive the attempt to define a particular social grouping as a neighborhood or community. Thus, if one's interest is to delimit the local area with which individual residents most identify, the unit defined may be quite small; a single street or a concentration of a couple of blocks may provide the proper dimensions (Keller 1968). Census tracts, for example, are constructed through the use of local committees which define areas based on their understanding of locally perceived boundaries.

If, on the other hand, one wishes to make locally delivered services more responsive to the needs and priorities of those who use them, the boundaries of such

an area may be considerably larger. In addition, one may wish to relate these boundaries to those defined by relevant institutions (Ohlin 1960) (to coordinate the planning and delivery of such services) or by governmental agencies (to facilitate funding opportunities and to provide a vehicle for representation to the municipal government.

Appendix 6-2

Definitions of Social Capital

About this Appendix:

Increasingly, reform efforts are seeking to strengthen networks of support within neighborhoods and communities that promote family growth and development. This excerpt from an occasion paper by Charles Bruner indicates some of the different ways this social fabric, and its importance to child and family well-being, has been described and provides bibliographic references to other works on the subject.

Source:

Bruner, Charles. *Toward Government's Role as Catalyst: Building Social Capital in Disinvested Neighborhoods*. Des Moines, IA: Child and Family Policy Center, 1995.

Excerpt:

I. Definitions of Social Capital

There is increasing interest in the service reform world of extending beyond providing professional services to constructing community support networks to improve the status of children and families, particularly in disinvested neighborhoods and communities. Different researchers use different terminology to define the type of "community supports" or "social capital" that is needed for children and youth to thrive. John VanDenBerg says simply, "If a child doesn't have friends, he or she is unlikely to succeed" in explaining the need for "wrap-around" services for multi-problem youth.[1] The Community Collaborative for Youth Development Initiative of Public Private Ventures describes five "core concepts" that lead to youth success, concepts it is seeking to develop within communities participating in the Initiative:

- Personal support and guidance from caring adults;
- Work as a tool for promoting personal development and learning as well as preparation for future employment;
- Constructive activities that fill critical gap periods and facilitate major transitions;
- Active youth involvement in program and community activities; and
- Continuity of attention to these four areas from early adolescence to adulthood.[2]

Chapin Hall has introduced the concept of "primary services" (e.g. "sports teams, peer support groups, parks, Y's, church and synagogue youth groups, libraries and museums") as being integral to youth development and success.[3] David Hawkins, Richard Catalano, and Associates speak of "protective" or "resiliency" factors in predicting youth success and are marketing a social development strategy based upon achieving healthy behaviors through creating

opportunities, skills, and recognition for bonding (attachment and commitment) with positive influences to produce healthy beliefs and clear standards.[4] Karen Pittman stresses the need to support the "inner circles" around a youth--family, peer and adult friends, role models, and community organizations--and work positively toward youth development, voluntarily, informally, and with an eye toward developing the whole person.[5]

From his research on communities in central Italy, Robert Putnam speaks of the importance of "social capital" in economic growth and regeneration. He stresses that community development must devote attention to "religious organizations, choral societies and Little Leagues that may seem to have little to do with politics or economics."[6] Bronfenbrenner labels this social milieu and network of community supports as "microsystems" critical to human development.[7] William Julius Wilson calls these stable working and middle-class individuals and institutions "social buffers" needed to sustain a neighborhood or community.[8] Frank Reissman and David Carroll have stressed the importance of "self-help" networks and organizations as a significant source of "social capital," with a need for policy and practice to better integrate "self-help" with professional services and supports.[9]

Whatever the terminology used and the nuances of definition, these researchers all describe a largely nonprofessional, voluntary, rich and layered network of social activities and behaviors within a community that afford children, families, and youth the opportunity to congregate, share experiences and interests, and realize some of their aspirations in a way that enhances overall community cohesion. Whether individual families, children, and youth participate in these social activities, their existence within a community serves to reinforce positive development for all community members.

Further, this social capital can be distinguished from other forms of capital -- economic, physical, and human capital. Table One (see page 40) provides a characterization of these different types of capital and the types of public activities supporting their development. As Table One suggests, the public sector is involved, directly or indirectly, in financially supporting the development of all these types of capital, although much of the actual expenditure is in the form of tax benefits.

Prudence Brown, however, notes that the act of describing the importance of this social fabric does not, in itself, uncover effective strategies for building it in neighborhoods where it does not exist or is torn and threadbare:

> Although described in different ways, comprehensive initiatives aim to "strengthen the social fabric" of the community or, in sociological terms, build social capital. ... While recent research supports the importance of social capital for a well-functioning neighborhood, there is almost no knowledge about how to increase this potential asset in a distressed neighborhood.[10]

VanDenBerg, John. *Alaska Youth Initiative* (Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities: 1991).

Table One
Types of Capital Needed for a Strong Society and Public Activities Supporting their Development

Types of Capital	*Examples*	*Public Activities Supporting Development – Mainstream*	*Public Activities Supporting Development – Targeting Disinvested or Distressed Neighborhoods*
ECONOMIC	• Businesses • Plant capacity • Financial resources available – Lending – Venture capital	• State economic development programs/incentives • Small Business Administration • Preferential tax treatment of investment (deferral of capital gains, depreciation, expensing, and depreciation allowances, R&D tax treatment, etc.)	• CDBG • CDC's • Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Community
PHYSICAL	• Housing stock • Sanitation systems • Roads • Public transportation • Communications networks	• Direct funding for construction • Revenue bonding • Mortgage deductions	• Section 8 Housing and other HUD programs • CDC's • Weatherization programs
SOCIAL	• Churches • Voluntary organizations • Neighborhood groups • Civic involvement • Parks and swimming pools	• Tax exempt status of – Non-profits – Churches • School extra-curricular activities • City recreation programs • Public parks	• Targeted youth development programs • Community center/family centers • Weed-and-seed; Midnight basketball
HUMAN	• Work history and experience of adults • Skills and expertise of population • Health and orientation to learning of population	• K-12 education system • Support for higher education • Student loan programs • Tax treatment of health insurance	• Title I • Targeted grants for higher education • JTPA • Medicaid; MCH Block Grant

Note: This chart shows that there are significant public investments made in the development of all four types of capital which are available without reference to level of need. This is not an issue of whether government should be involved; but how government should be involved. In fact, the tax expenditures identified within the public activities supporting capital development as "mainstream" investments are much larger than those more specifically targeting disinvested or distressed neighborhoods.

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[1] Public Private Ventures. *Community Change for Youth Development (CCYD): Establishing Long-Term Supports in Communities for the Growth and Development of Young People* (Concept Paper. Philadelphia, PA: Fall 1993).

[2] Richman, Harold, Joan Wynn, and Joan Costello. *Children's Services in Metropolitan Chicago: Directions for the Future* (The Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago. Volume IV of a series of reports prepared for the Chicago Community Trust. 1991).

[3] Developmental Research and Programs. *Communities That Care: Risk Focused Prevention: What Does it Mean for Community Prevention Planning?* (Seattle, WA).

[4] Pittman, Karen. *A Youth-Centered View of Community Supports* (The Center for Youth Development and Policy Research. Academy for Education Development. Washington, DC).

[5] Putnam, Robert. "The Prosperous Community: Social Capital and Public Life." *The American Prospect* (Spring 1993); and *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton University Press. Princeton, NJ: 1993).

[6] Bronfenbrenner, U. "Ecology of the Family is a Context for Human Development: Research Perspectives." *Developmental Psychology* 22, No. 6 (1986) pp. 723-42.

[7] Wilson, William Julius. *The Truly Disadvantaged* (Chicago: University of Chicago. 1987).

[8] Riessman, Frank and David Carroll. *Redefining Self-Help: Policy and Practice* (Jossey-Bass Publishers. San Francisco, NY. 1995).

[9] Brown, Prudence. *Comprehensive Neighborhood-Based Initiatives: Implications for Urban Policy* (The Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago. Background memorandum prepared for a Roundtable on Neighborhood Change and Community Empowerment at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. December 10, 1993). Quotes from p. 8 and 9.

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Appendix 6-3
A Ladder of Citizen Participation

About this Appendix:

There was a great deal of emphasis upon "citizen participation" in the War on Poverty and Great Society programs of the 1960s, which includes the use of the term "maximum feasible participation." This excerpt from an article by Sherry Arnstein is based upon the experiences of that period.

Source:

Arnstein, Sherry, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation." Reprinted by permission of the *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* Vol. 35, No. 4 (July 1969), p. 216-224.

Excerpt:

My answer to the critical *what* question is simply that citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power. It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parceled out. ...

There is a critical difference between going through the empty ritual of participation and having the real power needed to affect the outcome of the process. ... Participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless. It allows the powerholders to claim that all sides were considered, but makes it possible for only some of those sides to benefit. It maintains the status quo. ...

A typology of eight *levels* of participation may help in analysis of this confused issue. For illustrative purposes the eight types are arranged in a ladder pattern with each rung corresponding to the extent of citizens' power in determining the end product.

The bottom rungs of the ladder are (1) *Manipulation* and (2) *Therapy*. These two rungs describe levels of "non-participation" that have been contrived by some to substitute for genuine participation. Their real objective is not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programs, but to enable powerholders to "educate" or "cure" the participants. Rungs 3 and 4 progress to levels of "tokenism" that allow the have-nots to hear and to have a voice: (3) *Informing* and (4) *Consultation*. When they are proffered by powerholders as the total extent of participation, citizens may indeed hear and be heard. But under these conditions they lack the power to insure that their views will be *heeded* by the powerful. When participation is restricted to these levels, there is no follow through, no "muscle," hence no assurance of changing the status quo. Rung (5) *Placation*, is simply a higher level of tokenism because the groundrules allow have-nots to advise, but retain for the powerholders the continued right to decide.

Further up the ladder are levels of citizen power with increasing degrees of decision-making clout. Citizens can enter into a (6) *Partnership* that enables them to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with traditional powerholders. At the topmost rungs, (7) *Delegated Power* and (8) *Citizen Control*, have-not citizens obtain the majority of decision-making seats, or full managerial power.

Obviously, the eight-rung ladder is a simplification, but it helps to illustrate the point that so many have missed -- that there are significant gradations of citizen participation. Knowing these gradations makes it possible to cut through the hyperbole to understand the increasingly strident demands for participation from the have-nots as well as the gamut of confused responses from the powerholders.

(The article goes on to discuss, in some detail, the different rungs on the ladder, drawing from experiences of federal community action, Model Cities, and other programs.)

Appendix 6-4
Obtaining Resident Views

About this Appendix:

Chapters 5 and 6 from the NCSI Resource Brief, *Charting a Course*, describe different ways to gain resident and consumer perspectives and use community assessments to build new relationships and connections with neighborhood groups and potential leaders.

Source:

Bruner, Charles, Karen Bell, Claire Brindis, Hedy Chang, and William Scarbrough. *Charting a Course: Assessing a Community's Strengths and Needs*. Des Moines, Iowa: National Center for Service Integration, 1994.

Excerpt:

Chapter 5: Examining Consumer Values and Goals

The previous chapter discussed the types of objective or statistical information that can be obtained about a community, its residents, its services, and its resources. At least as important is the collection of subjective information about the community and what its residents, service providers, and leaders value and seek. These perspectives are valuable in designing effective services and interventions — especially when the community is seeking to improve the poor outcomes experienced by a number of children and families in the community.

Personal interviews or written surveys of adolescents, their parents, and service providers can provide valuable information that complements statistical data and adds depth and perspective to a community profile. These activities provide insights on the adequacy of current services by examining the experiences residents have had with them. Often, results can be eye-openers and can suggest different approaches to reaching children and families.

Consumer Surveys and Interviews

In conducting interviews, it is important to record the views of a variety of families and service providers. Where possible, families selected for interviewing should include families that represent all neighborhoods and ethnic and cultural groups in the community, as well as families who both have and have not used existing community services. A "population-based study" (interviews of randomly selected households, to assure that all types of families are selected) is an ideal technique because it includes a representative sample of all families. The cost of conducting such a sampling, however, even when using volunteers, can be high.

Alternatives to a population-based interview survey are to administer interviews at commonly used sites, such as schools, churches, laundromats, grocery stores, and

preschool settings. If these sites are selected, however, it is important to interview as diverse a group of families as possible. Any interpretation of results from the interviews must reflect the fact that some consumers may have not been represented.

One value of interviews is that they more systematically gather the perspectives that families have of community and family needs. Another value is that they allow members of the community collaborative to get closer to the actual level of service provision, either by participating in interviews or reviewing the results. When volunteers and community collaborative members conduct the interviews, they should be trained to obtain the best results. Role-playing and practice interviewing help, and a clear interview protocol should guide all interviews.

Focus Groups

Focus groups are another way to identify the views and perspectives of neighborhood and community residents. As with surveys and interviews, focus groups take substantial advance planning — to frame the issues and questions for the discussions. It is also essential to use a facilitator who understands the questions and can draw out people to clarify responses and deepen understanding.

Focus groups represent an excellent way to bring out the views of current and potential users of neighborhood and community services, and to obtain insights from frontline service workers. In general, participants in focus groups are invited on the basis of their common characteristics, shared memberships, or similar social status and/or comparable professional roles.

Focus groups and community forums provide an opportunity for extended discussions and follow-up on key points. They are a particularly successful way to define the needs of subgroups such as children, adolescents, or ethnically, linguistically, or culturally distinct groups.

One manual on focus groups defines them as "carefully planned discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment." Focus groups usually involve between seven and ten people led by a skilled facilitator, and they take place in a relaxed, comfortable, and enjoyable environment. During the discussion, participants interact with each other and build on each other's comments.

One of the major advantages of focus groups is that they are relatively inexpensive to conduct. They do require substantial advance planning, to generate useful information, however, and often it helps to provide small gifts to the participants for their time, particularly when the participants represent potential consumers who are rarely contacted for their advice.

Making Use of the Community's Perspectives

The following steps have been recommended to make the best use of focus groups:

- Identify important constituencies, both potential recipients of services and potential frontline service practitioners, whose views can help fashion effective service strategies.

•Develop questions that should be raised with these constituencies, using an open-ended format that will encourage discussion. With focus groups, as opposed to surveys and interviews, it is possible to go into some depth on possible different recommendations for action and on how to design service strategies.

•Identify and train focus group facilitators. Facilitators should know the goals and purposes of the focus groups and understand group dynamics. They should know how to deal with a quiet, passive group, an overly exuberant group, an outspoken group member, and individuals who go off on tangents. They must be skilled at "reframing" questions when necessary so that the group understands the question's meaning. They must be able to put a variety of different personality types at ease.

•Recruit focus group participants who fairly represent the selected constituency, and include different personality types and perspectives. At the neighborhood level, recruitment may mean conducting the focus group at a known and accepted location, such as a member's house or a church, and from an appropriate cultural base so that the focus group session will be a socially attractive activity.

•Prepare focus groups with consistent and sufficient background information about the meeting's goals. The facilitator should accompany the questions with contextual information and use a logical sequence that remains focused on the study's goals and objectives.

•Record as much of the discussion as possible, preferably using a note-taker other than the facilitator. The record should reflect the points on which there was strong agreement or which the group identified as particularly important.

•In interpreting the results of the focus group, remember that each group may represent one, but only one, perspective on the issue. Insights gained from focus groups must be evaluated in the context of other insights obtained from the assessment process. The value of focus groups, as well as resident surveys and interviews, is to gain additional perspectives and views that otherwise would not be heard.

The perspectives of community residents and frontline workers in fashioning effective strategies to achieve community goals often prove essential to progress, particularly when the service's target population is one with which most community collaborative members have little contact.

Chapter 6: Establishing New Relationships and Partnerships

To repeat, a community assessment is both a *product* and *process*. However good the community assessment is in producing a product, that product will be used only if

the process builds commitment to and ownership of the assessment. If planners delegate responsibility for the entire community assessment to some outside person or group, which operates largely independently of the community collaborative, it is likely that the assessment will not become an integral part of the community's strategic planning and action. If, however, collaborative members become active participants in the process of designing the community assessment and collecting the information, the process can help establish overall ownership of the initiative's goals and can help identify promising strategies for achieving those goals.

At the same time, the initiation of contacts with neighborhood and community organizations, the surveying of residents, and the collecting of information from focus groups, all represent opportunities for building *new relationships*. Some communities have found that their community assessment identified individual leaders who played key roles within the initiative. Others have established productive new collaborations among community providers as a result of relationships established during the assessment.

Virtually any service integration effort must build new relationships among community members. A community assessment sometimes represents the first step in building new networks of neighborhood and community support. The process of collecting information for a community assessment can be the same process as building relationships and networks of neighborhood and community support — and can ultimately establish governance and implementation systems that can tackle tough community issues.

Appendix 6-5
Mapping Community Strengths

About this Appendix:

New tools and strategies have been developed to look at neighborhoods and communities from a strength, as opposed to needs, basis. John McKnight and John Kretzmann, in particular, have developed conceptual and practical tools to map community assets and strengths. As McKnight and Kretzmann stress, many community assessments inventory neighborhood needs or deficits, but community building must build from strengths and assets, not deficits. The Family Resource Coalition has produced a practical guide, *Know Your Community*, that provides a comprehensive approach to community assessment that incorporates asset mapping. The United Way of Cincinnati has used McKnight and Kretzmann's asset mapping approach and described its impact upon its work. This appendix briefly describes some of the literature on asset mapping.

Annotated Bibliography:

McKnight, John, and John Kretzmann. *Mapping Community Capacity*. Report of the Neighborhood Innovations Network. Chicago, IL: Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research, Northwestern University, 1991.

> This article provides an excellent, brief conceptual overview of the difference between needs mapping and asset mapping and the power and potential for taking an asset approach to community assessment.

McKnight, John and John Kretzmann. *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*. Evanston, IL: Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research, Northwestern University, 1993.

> This book provides the nuts-and-bolts for making contact with a wide array of community-based organizations and affiliations in mobilizing a community for change. It serves as a resource and guide for identifying community assets and resources, including discussions of the different assets and resources that exist in communities and how to approach and engage them.

Samuels, Bryan, Nilofer Ahsan, and Jill Garcia. *Know Your Community: A Step-by-Step Guide to Community Needs and Resources Assessment*. Chicago, IL: Family Resource Coalition, 1996.

> This guide describes a five-part process to community assessment: (1) establishing a community planning team, (2) defining community boundaries, (3) developing a

statistical profile, (4) assessing needs from residents' perspectives, and (5) identifying assets and resources. It includes many tools for collecting information, and emphasizes resident involvement in all aspects of community assessment.

United Way and Community Chest of Greater Cincinnati. *Report on Community Capacity Building.* Unpublished document. n.d.

The United Way and Community Chest of Greater Cincinnati worked with John McKnight and his colleagues in conducting asset mapping in several neighborhoods in Cincinnati, as part of their community capacity building efforts. This report describes the work in Cincinnati, including lessons learned and challenges and opportunities to implementing an asset mapping process as part of a larger community capacity building initiative.

Appendix 6-6

The Nature and Potential of Community Organizing

About this Appendix:

Robert Fisher has produced a very insightful study of the history of neighborhood organizing in America, *Let the People Decide*. The material here is taken from the set of conclusions from the 1984 edition of the book. The 1994 edition contains an update of neighborhood organizing through the 1980's.

Source:

Fisher, Robert. *Let the People Decide: Neighborhood Organizing in America*. Boston, MA: G.K. Hall and Company, 1984. Updated edition reprinted by Twayne Publishers, McMillan Publishing Company.

Excerpts:

Neighborhood Organizing Cuts Across the Political Spectrum.

> While neighborhood organizing is a political act, it is neither inherently reactionary, conservative, liberal, or radical, nor is it inherently democratic and inclusive or authorization and parochial. ... Organizations can be creative efforts open to innovation and supportive of progressive struggles as well as defensive responses to external pressures.

Neighborhood Organizing Movements Develop in a Historical Context That Includes, but Transcends Local Community Borders.

> [T]he efforts of working-class and poor people's organization develop best in periods of profound social dislocation when (1) the regulatory power of social institutions break down and (2) sharp economic change occurs producing depressed *or* improved conditions, the former encouraging people to defend themselves, the latter raising their expectations. It is not so much prosperity or depression at the national and local level that leads to radical neighborhood organizing, but rather external pressures on traditional communities and the breakdown of the routines of daily life that make people more receptive to activism and alternative organizations.

There is a Critical Interaction Between Neighborhood Organizing Efforts, National Politics, and Nationwide Social Movements.

> A critical interaction also occurs between neighborhood organizing projects and nationwide social movements. Currently, neighborhood organizing and other forms of grassroots activity serve as the building blocks of larger social movements. They provide the spaces, organizational skills, and grassroots heritage which can renew itself in political struggle. A the same time, national movements, once established, provide direction and support to local efforts.

Problems Besetting Neighborhoods Demand Political Organization Beyond the Neighborhood Level.

> Small may be beautiful, more manageable, and more feasible for democratic participation, but commonly the neighborhood is neither the site of the causes of its problems nor the site of the power needed to address them. ... [W]hat neighborhood organizing movements need, as the experiences of the new left and many other projects since have demonstrated, are ongoing, national political organizations which can provide continuity, direction, and motivation for local efforts and which, in turn, can be guided and reinvigorated by struggles in communities and workplaces at the local level.

Neighborhood Organizing Must Be Built on More Than Material Rewards and Incentives.

> Victories are critical; people see themselves and their power differently after initial success. But effectiveneighborhoodorganizingefforts,especially in lower income areas where the neighborhood organization does not have the resources to deliver rewards for very long, demands more than a reliance on incentives.... [N]eighborhoodorganizing must be built around issues of personal development and an ideology that articulates a sense of purpose extending beyond individual advantage. It must be committed to developing the knowledge, dignity, and self-confidence of community residents.

Neighborhood Organizing Must Create and Sustain a Galvanizing Vision Rooted in People's Lives and Traditions.

> Lower-class and working-class neighborhood organizing must develop long-range goals which address imbalances in a class society, an alternative vision of what people are fighting for, and a context for all activity, whether pressuring for a stop sign or an eviction blockage. Otherwise, as has repeatedly happened, victories that win services or rewards will *undermine* the organization by "proving" that the existing system is responsive to poor and working people and, therefore, is in no need of fundamental change.

Neighborhood Organizing Requires a Gentle Balance Between Organizing, Leading, and Education.

> The best organizer is not so much a leader as a catalyst ... To the extent that organizing perpetuates the mystique of the great, gifted, self-sacrificing, professional organizer, people shy away from tasks and rely on the organizer. The organizer may accomplish many things, but he or she will not develop indigenous leaders, will not be able to educate people in the process of democracy, will perpetuate interest-group styles of neighborhood organizing, and will not organize a project with any long-term staying power.
>
> Organizers bring an ideology, skills, experience, and perspective to their work; they owe it to neighborhood people to share this with them

openly and honestly. Not to do so will, in the long run, increase suspicion. The craft is to do so in a democratic manner where organizers see themselves not only as catalysts and guides but also as recipients of knowledge, experience, and strength of local people and their traditions, where there is a true sense of sharing in a dynamic democratic process.

Political Education Must Be an Integral Part of Neighborhood Organizing.

Political education should help people develop the confidence necessary to rely on themselves, win the personal dignity and self-respect basic to participation, and challenge existing authority when necessary. ... The role of political education, which is an analysis that grows out of people's political experience, not a paternalistic classroom exercise, is to broaden people's perspective and to give them more information upon which they can make more reasoned assessments of the conditions, problems, and alternative solutions they face.

Success Must Be Measured in Tangible and Intangible Rewards.

Except when conditions are appropriate, it is difficult for neighborhood organizing efforts to achieve their objectives. External conditions, more than internal ones, affect success.

Curiously, even when challenging groups succeed for a time, their victories often make their opponents that much wiser and sophisticated. Opponents refuse to continue to cooperate for long in their own demise; after initial defeats they change their tactics and force neighborhood projects to reevaluate and alter once successful approaches. Success is not a static situation, nor is failure.

[A]ny evaluation must include intangible as well as tangible results. The development of dignity, hope, self-confidence, and pride, the planting of seeds of organizational experience which may come to fruition years later and perhaps far away from the initial community experience, the raised political consciousness of organization members, can all prove more important than more measurable victories. In general, the lion's share of gains of neighborhood organizing rests not with tangible results but rather in the lives of the people who participate in them.

-- quotes are from pages 158-166

Appendix 6-7
Hiring Community Workers

About this Appendix:

One way to engage neighborhood residents is to hire them as service providers. The use of paraprofessionals in the Ford Foundation's *Fair Start for Children* Initiative was studied in some depth. The excerpts provided here are from an evaluation of Fair Start for Children by Mary Larner, Robert Halpern, and Oscar Harkavy.

Source:

Larner, Mary, Robert Halpern, and Oscar Harkavy. *Fair Start for Children: Lessons Learned from Seven Demonstration Projects*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992.

Excerpt:

Introduction to Fair Start for Children

Many of the families at greatest risk are those who are not in the system, who do not seek out assistance, who cannot cope with the bureaucracy, or who have been disappointed so often they no longer see public programs and services as relevant to their lives. That realization has prompted a growing interest in programs that actively reach out to families, that are rooted in the neighborhoods where poor families live, and that go the extra mile to respond to the values and concerns of the people they serve. [p. 4]

This book tells the story of a Ford Foundation grants program called Child Survival/A Fair Start for Children that was launched in the early 1980s. The Child Survival/Fair Start programs addressed issues related to birth and infant health and development among families that were poor and underserved by traditional human services. [p. 5-6]

The programs created networks of community helpers who reached out to mothers and infants, attempting to increase "access to and use by poor households of available health, nutrition, and childrearing skills and technology in order to improve their capacity for self-care." Four features distinguish this intervention model:

1. A preventive focus on pregnancy and infancy, offering education, support, and information about appropriate services.
2. Targeting toward low-income groups who are underserved by traditional health and support services because of geographic, cultural, economic, or cognitive barriers.
3. Multidisciplinary content, incorporating information about health, nutrition, child development, and social services.
4. Implementation through personal contact with paraprofessional outreach workers who are members of the community. [p. 6-7]

Lessons Learned by the CS/FS Project

Too often the crucial practical decisions about staffing, recruitment of participants, and program activities are given short shrift by the program developers. [p. 10]

In the experience of the CS/FS project, two aspects of program implementation emerged as especially critical. The first of these was finding ways of engaging the interests of the target families. ... Most of the CS/FS project teams concluded that they were unprepared to serve seriously troubled or multiproblem families whose needs and difficulties outstripped the resources and expertise of the programs. It takes cash and clout to pull a family through a financial or legal crisis, and it takes intensive, professional services to repair the damage wrought by drug abuse, alcoholism, maltreatment, or mental illness. The strength of the preventive CS/FS projects lay in the affirmation and support they gave to families who were challenged by their circumstances but were able to cope and even look to the future. Part of understanding what a program can do well is accepting what it cannot do. [p. 13 & 15]

The second implementation issue ... concerns the decision ... to use nonprofessional members of the community to serve as program workers. This strategy is viewed by proponents as a means of controlling program costs, ensuring cultural sensitivity, creating jobs for the disadvantaged in depressed neighborhoods, or building a bridge between poor communities and the public institutions that serve them. ... A crucial choice for any new program concerns the balance that will be struck on the staff between professional expertise and community representation. [p. 15]

Initially, many projects discussed or experimented with the use of volunteers but found that the members of low-income communities seldom have the luxury of donating their time to good works ... they must make a living. [p. 16]

The choice of paraprofessional workers allowed the CS/FS program to capitalize on the talents of local women, who are often an underutilized resource in the nation's poor communities. Each project team discovered bright, energetic, and dedicated women (and men) whose personal skills were being wasted since they were handicapped on the job market by a lack of education or work experience. In the context of a parent program, their personal characteristics (social ease, sensitivity, maturity, and self-awareness) counted heavily and allowed them to succeed, and for many opened the door to other jobs in human service agencies. However, the key to this growth was the heavy investment that the projects made in training and ongoing, supportive supervision. [p. 16]

What is it that works when parent programs are effective? The CS/FS projects concluded, as have many other leaders of parent programs, that the mechanism that brings about change is the personal relationship participants establish with program staff or with other participants in the case of group programs. This relationship blends three basic elements: education (information sharing, demonstration, role modelling); practical assistance (help in emergencies, linkage to services, transportation, or translation); and social support (active listening, sharing of personal experiences, friendship). In combination, and given time to mature in a trusting relationship, these three elements can not only

increase knowledge of appropriate parenting behaviors ... but motivate the participants to apply that knowledge in concrete action. [p. 18]

On Program Design and Implementation

An important lesson in this area was that the hiring, and especially the training of program staff, should not precede the clarification of the program model by too much. ... Many of the home visitors selected were well-known to the implementing agency, some because of their standing in the community. But in a number of cases their skills proved incompatible with what was needed in the program that eventually took shape. [p. 183]

The CS/FS grantees came to identify, and address in training and supervision, two notable limitations in the use of lay family workers. First, when the lay workers were drawn from the population served, they were often still wrestling in their own lives with the choices, issues, and problems they were to address with the families they visited. ... One supervisor commented that the more closely the workers resemble the clients, the more their instincts 'resemble those things about the client population we are trying to alter.'" [p. 187]

A second limitation that emerged relating to the use of lay workers resulted from the willingness of many workers to take responsiveness and availability too far. In their work with families, lay workers sometimes (albeit unconsciously) fostered too much dependence on their assistance with problems of daily living. [p. 188]

Characteristics of Effective Lay Workers

One key characteristic that emerged as important was evidence that a person had come to terms with the formative experiences of her life—her own childrearing, her marital and family relationships, her experience as a parent—regardless of whether these were positive or negative experiences. ... They could empathize with mothers who were experiencing problems similar to their own without overidentifying or denying the validity of the mothers' feelings, and they avoided prejudging the mother or other family members. [p. 189]

Another characteristic that emerged as common in effective home visitors was a strong social-relational orientation: an active interest in other people, a tendency to engage other people socially, driven by curiosity and a desire to make social connections. [p. 189]

A third characteristic was an ability to handle a relatively unstructured role with a variety of demands, to function effectively in programs that often gave them a range of scheduling options and limited specific guidance; and to balance responsiveness to family interests with a goal-oriented awareness of the agenda that should be covered. [p. 189]

In all the programs the helping role of the family workers encompassed instruction and guidance, concrete assistance with problems, help in securing services, crisis intervention, encouragement and emotional support, and some counseling. [p. 190]

Family workers had to find a balance between program-initiated and family-initiated agenda. [p. 191]

Although helping roles varied with programs and individual workers, a central lesson ... was that the guidance, advice, service brokerage, and other functions provided by the family workers were more effective after a

trusting relationship had been established. The time it took to develop a relationship varied enormously, from a few weeks to as much as a year. [p. 192]

In-service training and one-to-one supervision became the main vehicles the supervisors used to nurture the skills of the family workers in helping and providing support. [p. 194]

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Synthesis of Lessons Learned in Using Community Paraprofessionals

For Home Visiting in Poor Communities (prepared by the Child and Family Policy Center based upon *Fair Start for Children*)

1. Employing community paraprofessionals is not necessarily cheaper than using professionals, as the training and staff development costs are substantial, but it has other benefits.

2. Community workers can gain access to isolated families, and can use their knowledge of the community to good purpose in their work.

3. It is unrealistic to expect "volunteers" to fill this role in poor communities; poor people cannot afford to volunteer.

4. It is, however, possible to find a work force within poor neighborhoods of individuals with the aptitude and orientation to perform this work very effectively.

5. Community leaders do not necessarily make the best community workers; this is work that requires certain skills and orientations.

6. Programs can learn to identify, recruit, and select community workers with these skills and orientations.

7. One of the common mistakes initiatives make is to give too little attention to the issues of program structure, goals, and needed worker skills in establishing such community-based efforts.

8. Establishing a relationship with families is critical to worker success; it is not simply imparting knowledge based upon a curriculum.

9. Establishing relationships takes time, and requires a good "match" between worker and family.

10. Supervision and ongoing training and support are essential to effective practice; pre-service training can only impart a small part of the needed knowledge and skills.

11. Community workers must find a balance to addressing family-initiated concerns and meeting program-oriented ones.

12. Community workers must know their limitations and cannot be expected, nor should try, to address all the complex needs of multiproblem families.

Appendix 6-8

Government's Role in Building Social Capital

About this Appendix:

This second excerpt from an occasional paper by Charles Bruner provides some illustrations of ways in which government can help to support the development of social capital within disinvested neighborhoods.

Source:

Bruner, Charles. *Toward Government's Role as Catalyst: Building Social Capital in Disinvested Neighborhoods*. Des Moines, IA: Child and Family Policy Center, 1995.

Excerpt:

III. Beyond Description to Practical Strategy: First Thoughts on Social Capital Formation

Clearly, one major task for reformers and researchers is to develop and test different strategies for building this social capital and responding to the challenge raised in Prudence Brown's remarks.

James Connell and Larry Aber recently produced one taxonomy of possible strategies for building this social capital (in their terminology, increasing the supply and capacity of "social mediators," or "competent adult networks" for children and youth) within disinvested communities, focusing their attention on youth (6- to 19-year-olds).[1] They focus upon three sets of adults who are primarily involved in the lives of children and youth:

- adults living with the youth, including primary care-givers and other adult household residents;
- adults in the professional support network, including those working with youth in school and in primary and secondary service settings, and
- adults in the community-support network, including neighbors, local employers of youth, and adults who work in the community where youth live.

Some of their strategies speak to one set of adults, some to another. While at a fairly abstract level, the strategies they identify are worth summarizing in depth. The authors arrange them within three broad areas:

- *Building the Knowledge Base*

  -- Design community-level programs in which trained and experienced parents from the community are paid to work with and provide support for other, less-experienced parents and care-givers.

  -- Involve the professional support network of adults--including school, social service, juvenile justice, and police personnel--in shared professional

development programs to build their knowledge base and repertoire of effective practices with respect to this group of youth.

-- Augment the training of adults working with youth in voluntary youth-serving organizations and other primary services such as churches, synagogues, parks, and recreation departments to include specific instruction and supervised experiences in these areas.

-- Initiate community programs for all residents in the area of conflict resolution and violence prevention, with particular emphasis on adult-youth relationships outside the home and school.

-- Work with local employers to craft mutually beneficial strategies for creating more developmentally oriented workplaces for younger youth.

- *Promoting Connectedness between Adults and Youth*

-- Change school catchment areas, schedules, and staffing patterns to promote continuity of adult support in school.

-- Develop case management approaches to social service provisions that keep one adult or a small team of adults coordinated across specialties with the youth over time.

-- Establish planned and regular interactions between community residents and youth, and between parents and youth, that build collective traditions of shared activities.

-- Provide high-quality day care for younger children that "frees up" parents to spend more time with their older children.

-- Establish programs to improve employers' family support practices that encourage increased parent-youth contact.

- *Connecting Adults in Youth's Support Networks*

– Create a common, consensually validated set of expectations for adult involvement with children and youth, e.g.

  - All adult caregivers are able to call on three other adults in the community who can provide competent care

  - Adults living or working with youth refrain from using violent and profane language in front of youth

  - Adults with responsibilities for youth have effective techniques for discouraging the use of physical violence to solve conflicts

  - Adults working with youth feel free to "call each other on the carpet" for not following through with their commitments to youth.

– Build dense and mutually supportive networks for

adults, through activities that encourage parents to:

- Find out who their neighbors are and whether and how many children they have
- Make initial contact where appropriate and feasible
- Engage in some shared activities (for example, a block party, group dinner, or attendance at a cultural or recreational event)
- Discuss their goals and values for youth, not seeking to achieve immediate consensus but looking for opportunities for shared actions
- Plan necessary actions and share responsibility for carrying them out (for example, evening neighborhood watches)
- Develop ways to look out for and offer support to other care-givers and their youth
- Recognize and accept that there are consequences when adults do not give what is deemed to be the minimum support for their own and each others' youth.[2]

Connell and Aber's list represents a useful starting point, but one which needs to be expanded and refined. Their taxonomy may have more relevance to poor but working class neighborhoods than to destitute ones. Public housing projects and neighborhoods beset by violence may create special challenges to social capital development.

The best way to expand and refine this list is to draw from current efforts in the field. The following are several such examples, some drawn from innovative efforts within severely disinvested neighborhoods. They are designed to be illustrative and suggestive of the diversity of approaches possible for social capital formation, guided by the ingenuity of those pursuing practical and new approaches to meeting family and neighborhood needs. While some are directly targeted to developing social capital, others have that as a significant and recognizable side benefit to other activity:

- Several widely-praised community-based programs, for instance the Vaughn Family Center, have established "exchange banks" that ask Center participants to contribute time and resources on an inkind basis for what they receive from the Center. Self-help movements have shown success in building a climate and spirit within disinvested neighborhoods; they emphasize individual worth and stress reciprocity, elements of social capital. "Exchange banks" not only are a means to extend scarce resources and to raise self-esteem among participants; they also are an entry point for adults to share their abilities with others.

- The Grameen Bank of Bangladesh's widely-cited peer group lending micro-enterprise program itself is based on the power of social capital. Its premise is that business start-up loans co-signed and overseen by friends, even if the recipient and the recipient's

friends are very poor, will be repaid. The signatory of friends constitutes both collateral and loan oversight. At the same time, it builds connections within the community that can lead to other entrepreneurial activities.[3]

• Community nonprofit organizations can help create community leaders when they take their own board development activities seriously and recruit, train, and nurture board members from their consumers. This provides another avenue for residents to participate in community affairs and to develop advocacy and management skills.[4]

• The Philadelphia Children's Network has been a leader in seeking to reintegrate inner-city young men into family and community life through their love for their children. The Network has emphasized that engaging or re-engaging fathers in the lives of their children can bring new meaning and hope into their lives, a sense of the future that is tied to making the community a place where children can grow. While it takes concerted work, Smith claims, "For young men who often are viewed as pariahs within the communities in which they live, parenting brings with it a unique opportunity to claim a stake in society."[5]

• Seeking to create more "center-based" child care opportunities for children with disabilities that did not involve "segregated" care, Sunrise Children's Center in Milford, New Hampshire found demand for such integrated settings exceeded their own center's ability to provide that care. They hired a staff to identify other possible providers -- and started responding to newspaper advertisements from family day care homes. They found many family day care homes willing to take children with disabilities, provided they had help in addressing any special needs. The homes ended up receiving help that often involved basic child development support that benefitted all the children under care. They created a new core of community allies for inclusion -- family day care homes provider and other children (and their parents) receiving care.

• In the 1960's, the Center for Community Change provided technical assistance and support for "citizen monitoring" of the use of community development block grant funds. They trained and supported neighborhood leaders in tracking funds and ensuring accountability for their use. The monitoring not only increased compliance and effective use of funding, it also built expertise by neighborhood residents to participate on equal grounds in other community budgeting and fiscal deliberations.[6]

• Religious institutions can be critical partners in community-based development. Church-based organizing sometimes has been a very effective strategy in inner-cities, as it fits the social justice mission of most churches and churches can provide a continuity of support and a safe place for meeting within the neighborhood. Often, there is a mutuality of interests addressing social needs of residents

while congregation-building for the churches involved."

• The Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) has been one of the few "intermediary" organizations in the country to provide truly long-term and intensive technical assistance to distressed neighborhoods and communities. CTAC has stressed a multiple approach to neighborhood regeneration, in many respects working from both "bottom up" and "top down" and using points of consensus as a place to start. Its current school reform initiative--working in such communities as Camden, New Jersey and Jackson, Mississippi--has employed a linked, four-dimensional approach that includes both an "inside" and "outside" strategy in leadership development, emphasizing: (1.) family participation and involvement in all aspects of reform, (2.) corporate and business involvement and leadership, (3.) site-based management of schools, and (4.) collaboration with human service and community-based organizations.

• Mutual assistance activities can become a base for community organization. The Del Paso Heights neighborhood in Sacramento, California, established a Mutual Assistance Network, promoting self-help, mutual assistance, and voluntary solutions. Like the Vaughn Family Center, a "time credit" bartering system was created. In addition, a community garden is being established, for residents interested in having garden plots and willing to help sustain the venture through developing a management board to move to independent management.*

Like most efforts, building social capital is likely to be a developmental and evolutionary activity. There must be "entry point" opportunities for individuals currently isolated from social systems to become involved. There also must be "ladders of opportunity" that offer increasing challenges and recognition for those who wish to move beyond the entry point.

Other strategies worth consideration are those that seek to nurture and support resident mobilization efforts for ensuring public safety (through community policing, neighborhood watches, etc.), tenant rights campaigns, and community development corporation activities--understanding that many of these are "entry point" opportunities for neighborhood residents to become involved. Some participants in these efforts, particularly if they achieve some success, will seek other opportunities to help rebuild their neighborhoods. They may become social capital entrepreneurs in their own areas of particular interest and concern. Rainbow Research, Inc. notes, with experience and common sense, that:

> In working to build an organization, leaders and organizers need to keep in mind that they are helping people learn lessons which will live long after a particular organization may be gone. ... The long range reality is that organizations don't last. If they do, they change. The lessons learned by the people are frequently the most durable evidence of change."

Finally, there is a role for encouraging those who

have found employment and left the neighborhood to return, to become a critical base of economic stability, Wilson's "social buffers." And there is a role for supporting a variety of community-based organizations, although they may be led by persons who themselves reside outside the neighborhood. The challenge for these community-based organizations is to view their outside leadership as transitional and to make concerted and explicit efforts to moving from being "community-based" to becoming "community-owned." There are too few examples in the field of community-based organizations, even those that provide much-needed and much-welcomed support to neighborhood residents, that truly have a mission of converting themselves to neighborhood governance and management.

IV. Establishing the Proper Role for Government: A Catalytic, not Compensatory, Role

As implied above, the perspective one takes to addressing the issue of social capital formation is critically important. One must first assume (the alternative is to accept defeat) that residents within disinvested neighborhood can produce the social capital their neighborhood needs. If it is not the absence of potential "social capitalists" that causes the shortage of such capital in distressed and disinvested neighborhoods, one must look to other missing factors. There may be few opportunities for residents to become involved. Those opportunities that exist may not fit the talents and skills that residents have to offer. They may not offer sufficient recognition to sustain involvement. They may not provide participants opportunities for continued growth, development, and new challenges. The costs of involvement may be too high. Safety may be a fundamental concern. The larger community, in subtle and not-so-subtle ways, may subvert social capital development efforts within the community. These barriers to social capital formation must be systematically addressed.

Ultimately, the "community empowerment" or "political activism" approach to social capital formation is to create these opportunities for residents and to break down the barriers impeding them. This requires a fundamentally new role for government. Government should be a catalyst for the development of social capital within neighborhoods; it cannot compensate or substitute for its absence. Defining government's role will require thought and experimentation. Hopefully, there will be many efforts to develop, and test, different strategies for creating social capital within disinvested communities. The need for knowledge-building in this area is clear. The first place to start is to identify, and then eliminate, the barriers that Halpern and others have suggested government can place on disinvested neighborhoods.

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[1] Connell, James P. and J. Lawrence Aber, with contributions by Gary Walker, "How Do Urban Communities Affect Youth? Using Social Science Research to Inform the Design and Evaluation of Comprehensive Community Initiatives," in Connell, James, Anne Kubisch, Lisbeth Schorr, and Carol Weiss (eds.) *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Concepts, Methods, and Contexts* (Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families: The Aspen Institute: 1995).

[2] *ibid.* pp. 114-117.

[3] Nelson, Candace. *Going Forward: The Peer Group Lending Exchange Conference Proceedings* (Calmeadow: Toronto, Canada: 1994).

[4] *Human Development: Building the CAA Staff and Board* (National Association of Community Action Agencies: Washington, DC: 1993).

[5] Smith, Ralph. "Putting Fathers into Families," *Georgia Academy Journal* (Winter, 1993-4). Quote from page 4.

[6] Eisenberg, Pablo. "Monitoring Government: Issues/Challenges/Approaches," *Foundation News* (March-April, 1979), pp. 43-47; and Kotz, Nick. "Citizens as Experts," *Working Papers* (March/April, 1981).

[7] Scheie, David. *Better Together: Religious Institutions as Partners in Community-Based Development* (Rainbow Research, Inc.: Minneapolis, MN) and Garland, James, "Congregation-Based Organizations: A Church Model for the 90's," *America* (November 13, 1993). See also the work of the Industrial Areas Foundation and the Campaign for Human Development.

[8] Bolton, Arthur. "A Strategy for Distressed Neighborhoods," in: *Strategies for Distressed Neighborhoods* (Center for Integrated Services for Families and Neighborhoods: Sacramento, CA: 1994). Pp. 5-29.

[9] McGinness, Grace. *Prerequisites to Power: Six Principles for Building Community* (Rainbow Research, Inc.: Minneapolis, MN: June, 1987).

Appendix 6-9
Citizen Monitoring

About this Appendix:

One role that residents can play in reform efforts is in monitoring government programs and spending. Citizen monitoring was promoted in the 1970's by the Center for Community Change, the National Urban League, and others and is re-emerging as a strategy in the 1990's, particularly in the federal government's Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community work. This appendix provides an annotated bibliography of further readings on the subject.

Description of Citizen Monitoring:

Citizen monitoring is a strategy for training and supporting community residents to monitor public programs and spending to assure they meet their objectives. Its goals are to improve fact-finding and accountability to low-income neighborhoods in the distribution of public funds and to empower people in neighborhoods through their acquisition of monitoring, evaluation, and advocacy skills.

In the 1970's, the federal government, through the Community Services Administration, funded a National Citizens Monitoring Project to train neighborhood groups in forty-three cities to assess how city governments spend community development money. Among other things, the Project demonstrated that residents could be effective program monitors in tracking, understanding, and interpreting complex financial transactions, provided they received training and support.

Annotated Bibliography:

Kotz, Nick, "Citizens as Experts," *Working Papers* (March/April, 1981).

This article describes the National Citizens Monitoring Project and its impact upon government accountability, with specific reference to what citizens were able to uncover contrasted with what external professional evaluations learned. The article concludes that citizen monitoring can play a vital role in local democratic processes, but needs to be supported if it is to flourish, particularly in low-income communities.

Eisenberg, Pablo, "Monitoring Government: Issues/Challenges/Approaches," *Foundation News* (March/April 1979). p. 43-47.

This article describes the purposes of citizen monitoring and evaluation, the approaches that can be taken to implement citizen monitoring, and the ingredients needed for successful citizen monitoring. Eisenberg is President of the Center for Community Change, the organization that has done the most to promote citizen monitoring as a tool for change.

Appendix 6-10
Involving Residents: First Steps

About this Appendix:

This excerpt from Rainbow Research Group's *Successful Neighborhood Self-Help: Some Lessons Learned* briefly describes different ways that neighborhood residents can be engaged and involved, followed by some illustrations.

Source:

Mayer, Steven and Steve Gray. *Successful Neighborhood Self-Help: Some Lessons Learned*. Minneapolis, MN: Rainbow Research, Inc., 1985.

Excerpt:

Provide Multiple Avenues of Involvement

The more ways there are for people to get involved, the more people with different skills, interests, and commitments can find an opportunity to participate in and get involved with helping the neighborhood.

Neighborhood groups have learned that interest won't be maintained for long if committee work is the only opportunity for involvement. ...

Opportunities for involving residents include:

- Projects that offer residents the opportunity to feel pride in themselves, each other, and the neighborhood.
- One-time events that involve many residents for a short period and give them a chance to try working together.
- Projects that use residents' talents and knowledge, or that offer them opportunities to learn new skills.
- Projects that promote greater reliance on themselves, and less dependence on impersonal or outside institutions.

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Illustrations of activities (some from *Successful Neighborhood Self-Help* and some from other sources):

- fix-up/clean-up drives
- cultural celebrations (baby naming ceremonies, Cinquo de Mayo parades)
- block parties and events
- neighborhood surveys and front steps interviewing
- "barter banks" allowing participants to provide inkind services and support
- support groups, cooking classes, athletic nights

Appendix 6-11
Cultural Democracy and Power Sharing

About this Appendix:

It is common for community collaboratives to develop new services and supports that are asset-oriented, family-focused, and neighborhood-based. These services and supports frequently are identified as family support programs. They usually include community- as well as individually-focused activities and ascribe to a number of "principles of effective practice" --holistic, preventive, and culturally competent, as well as asset-oriented, family-focussed, and neighborhood-based. Through discussion with workers, parents, administrators, and family support scholars of color, Makungu Akinyela has developed six principles for incorporating "cultural democracy" into family support programs and practices. These principles emphasize the centrality of addressing issues of race, culture, and power, particularly when working in disinvested neighborhoods.

Source:

Akinyela, Makungu. *Diversity, Cultural Democracy, and the Family Support Movement: An Abstract.* Chicago, IL: Family Resource Coalition of America: forthcoming.

Excerpt:

Cultural diversity is a fact of life in American society today. Increasingly, the issue is not whether diversity *should* be recognized and accepted. The pressing question for families, human service professionals and lay leaders in communities is how the power inequality between cultural ethnic communities and dominant culture society will be challenged in the future. On a practical level, this means that we need to rethink the design, development and implementation of family support so that programs reflect the experiences, values, and culture of the communities they serve.

Cultural democracy (Ramirez and Castaneda 1974; Darder 1991) is a philosophy which focuses on the question of power relationships between subordinate and dominant cultural groups in society. Cultural democracy supports the human right of each community to have equal access to information and equal influence over policies; program design, development, and implementation; evaluation; funding; and other issues which affect the community. Cultural democracy not only supports the right of each community to these things, but supports the community's right to express family support needs from their own cultural experience and their own cultural *voice*.

The most significant aspect of this paper is the reporting of findings from interviews by the author of workers, parents, administrators, and family support scholars of color. From the interviews, the following six principles of cultural democracy in family support work emerged.

1. Cultural self-determination in family support programs is an essential element for a successful program.

A common thread expressed throughout many family support programs conducted by and serving people of color is the idea of cultural "self-determination." This is the principle that people of color should define and articulate the cultural values and expressions which meet their needs and reflect their perspectives and experiences within programs. This common thread of self-determination as a cultural value in family support programs speaks very directly to "empowerment" and exactly what power means for communities of color. Appropriation of power practice as cultural self-determination, calls for strong efforts to reconstruct a society in which all cultures can share equally and have equal authority and access to resources which define power. Within family support, this equal participation must occur in all areas, including policy development, program implementation, participant involvement, and administration.

2. Ongoing training in cultural diversity issues of family support is a priority and cannot be considered a one- or two-time event.

Many of those interviewed related experiences of working for white dominated programs where "cultural competency" was reduced to a two-hour inservice training session every few years, or to a conference workshop on special occasions. The question of culture as a site of social change and struggle was rarely raised. Cultural competency usually meant familiarity with language, holidays, and some very generalized patterns of family behavior. As the family support movement grows and becomes a part of more communities, it will become imperative to enrich our understanding that cultural competency among staff and administrators is as important as the ability to converse with families in their own language.

3. The ethnic/cultural makeup of the staff from administrative to para-professional matters, and emphasis should be placed on staffing which reflects the linguistic/cultural/ethnic makeup of the community being served.

While some professionals might state that it is not so significant what the ethnicity or culture of the staff is, as long as they are "culturally competent," many family support professionals of color believe that the continuation of having key staff positions, particularly administrative and professional staff, filled by whites is a subtle message about the power relationships of the community to the larger society. This issue transcends the issue of "race" and is really an issue of power and representation. Jerry Tello states that when families of color must depend on authority figures who are not part of their community for so much of their survival, they receive a subtle message that the collective community is not capable of caring for itself and that they must in the end depend upon outside help. On the other hand, when families see professionals who are from the community and who are caring about the community's issues, the message is that the community is coming together to care for its own.

Professionals of color argue that this is important for the development of a sense of collective, community self-reliance.

4. Defining and developing a group identity among program participants and with the community as a whole is a key element to family and community power.

The question of group identity is rarely if ever mentioned in dominant culture family support literature. Yet group identity and involvement with the family's primary culture is a means for empowering families and the community to take actions which will change social conditions. Hedy Chang, Denise De La Rosa Salazer, and Cecelia Leong indicate that an integral part of creating the conditions under which people from diverse communities can engage in a dialogue about their common interests is supporting the efforts of diverse groups to build a strong sense of identity within their own group. Too often, efforts designed to strengthen the group consciousness of separate groups is viewed as the polar opposite of initiatives aimed at fostering understanding across groups in an integrated setting. Yet identification with the larger community and its needs is recognized as a strength for families and the individuals in the family and must be a building block for family support programs.

5. An emphasis on cultural group collective responsibility, commitment, and consciousness is encouraged and evident throughout the program.

Closely related to group identity is the notion of collective responsibility to the ethnic group and hence to the community. In an interview for this paper, Jerry Tello stated that "for many people of color, appropriating power and decision making is not an individual pursuit. Rather, it is a process in which the individual is relegated power by the community and given responsibility to work in the interest of the community." This notion of collective power rarely is embedded in the meaning of power as defined in social services and family support programs. "We are told not to rely on the authority of those in our circle, 'those are not the true teachers,' we are told," Tello said. Families of color often are discouraged from using the collective indigenous power of "natural" community leaders such as elders, curanderos (spiritual healers), and others. They are pushed to rely individually upon the resources of outside agencies which have little knowledge of the cultural ways and means of the community.

6. Issues of cultural uniqueness, community pride, and the use of culture as a tool to resist institutional discrimination is a key source of strength for the family and the community and is evident in the program.

While currently accepted family support principles and practice place culture as one aspect of family support, the culturally democratic principles of family support espoused by indigenous programs place the question of culture at the very center of program development and policy. In these programs, there is a strong focus on cultural reconstruction, validation, and reaffirmation. In family support programs facilitated by professionals of

color and others sensitive to cultural issues of ethnically diverse communities, culture is not simply *one* method of empowering families. Culture is a *primary source* of strength to overcome economic, political, and social problems which contribute to the marginalization and disruption of families.

Appendix 6-12

The Healthy Start Initiative -- Early Implementation: Lessons Learned

About this Appendix:

The federal Healthy Start Initiative is designed to reduce infant mortality in poor neighborhoods through comprehensive, community-based approaches. The first-year implementation experiences were discussed by program leaders and then incorporated into a book. This appendix offers the conclusions from the book, which are applicable to many community-based reform efforts.

Source:

McCoy-Thompson, M., J. Vanneman, and F. Bloom. The Healthy Start Initiative: *A Community-Driven Approach to Infant Morality Reduction -- Vol. II. Early Implementation. Lessons Learned.* Arlington, VA: National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health, 1994.

Excerpts:

Community Involvement

* Recognize culture and class differences

  – Be sensitive to culture and class differences. Consider cultural aspects when implementing programs in minority communities.

  – Examine policies, practices, and procedures for racial, gender, and age bias.

* Identify community needs

  – Ask the community to identify its problems, concerns, and needs. Do not assume the priorities of project leaders are necessarily the priorities of community members. In an area with high unemployment and inadequate housing, families may not see health care as a priority issue. These other issues must be dealt with before prenatal and pediatric care can be fully addressed.

  -- Trust the community: It knows what it needs, and how to solve its problems. Ideas and suggestions from focus groups can be outstanding.

* Involve the community in planning and implementing programs

  -- Build on existing community-based resources, and involve the community and its resource in planning and implementation.

  -- Encourage grassroots participation and involve the community early in the process of setting up programs. Time and effort are needed to develop and sustain community involvement.

  – Maintain a dialogue with the community, even if the process is frustrating.

– Make a commitment to involve the community integrally in the process of developing tools such as case management manuals.

* Employ community members

-- Take advantage of the special skills of community members through programs such as Resource Parents (outreach workers), in which clients receive assistance from trained members of their own community.

-- Use community development specialists from the community to help link the Healthy Start Initiative with existing community groups and agencies. The specialists' familiarity frequently facilitates open communication and expedites collaboration with community groups.

– Work with experienced community organizers, who can help diffuse many problems before they become disruptive to the program.

* Ensure community empowerment

-- Recognize that community empowerment is necessary to combat community problems. Often, the community does not realize all of its resources.

-- Empower communities through seed funding, but do not expect that these funds will guarantee success.

– Encourage government agencies to give power to the community. It is important for government to decentralize grant awards and enable community-based organizations to take charge when appropriate. While difficult, this process is important and has a critical long-term impact on the project and the community.

– Stress equality in power sharing; there can be no empowerment without ownership. Healthy Start teams emphasize that consumers and providers have an equal voice in planning and implementing programs, and that both are responsible for the project's success and failures. Too often, providers control programs while consumers do not participate because they sense that others do not listen to them or follow their directions.

-- Learn the meaning of power sharing through participatory leadership, consensus building, and collective responsibility.

Consortia (Collaborative) Development

* Develop consortia membership

-- Choose collaborative partners carefully.

-- Involve consumers, elders, and community members in the consortium.

– Minimize agency representation on advisory councils. Meetings should not be top-heavy.

– Establish governing bodies that reflect the ethnic composition of the community.

* Develop effective partnerships

– Find good partners by identifying organizations that have mutual goals.

– Coordinate services with other organizations, local colleges or universities, and other local, state and federal programs to conserve and expand resources, facilitate access, and integrate systems.

-- Recognize that agencies must work together to survive and to fulfill community needs.

* Develop consortia leadership
  – Ask the community who their leaders are when looking for community representatives.

  – Recognize that consortium building is a dynamic process, and that early consortia may change considerably; the consortium's leadership must have tolerance and adaptability while keeping the group goal-directed.

* Facilitate consortia participation
  -- Pay focus group participants for their time and effort.

  -- Allot funds to support community participation; for example, fund activities such as transportation and child care.

  -- Vary the settings of meetings and ensure that community members are not intimidated by meeting location.

Management and Governance

* Prepare well before beginning work
  – Do not start before the team is ready to begin--think through projects fully before beginning to work. Community groups are eager, but they may lack expertise; Healthy Start staff will need to work closely with the community.

  -- Codify working relationships so that future problems can be addressed by examining agreed-upon principles. Describe an equitable relationship between the community and the grantee on paper.

  -- Set realistic time frames.

* Address funding issues
  – Conduct pre-proposal orientations with community groups when allocating funds. Involve the community actively from the beginning, before RFPs are disseminated. Offer technical assistance to all agencies and organizations--especially community-based organizations--planning to respond.

  -- Be prepared for increased tension when grant monies are being distributed.

* Implement appropriate personnel policies
  – Recruit and place permanent staff quickly.

  – Assess the problem-solving skills of candidates for staff positions, and recognize that people without a high school education or a

GED may perform as well as (or better than) those with formal education credentials.

– Use multidisciplinary case management teams to provide comprehensive services.

– Hold meetings across disciplines and keep staff informed of program activities in other sectors.

– Place highly skilled managers in supervisory positions, especially when staff from the community do not have substantive working experience.

* Emphasize monitoring.

– Realize that effective project management and accountability are critical to the success of the program.

– Make quality assurance a high organizational priority.

– Address the user-friendliness of the clinic by working directly with service providers to change clinic policies and characteristics.

– Ask consumers what they think of the services being provided.

– Tailor data tools to the specific needs and circumstances of the community.

– Consider the ramifications of providing intensive services to a few people, compared to providing less intensive services to a larger group.

– Recognize that collaboration takes time and hard work, and that it can be difficult to turn over services to the community if its members do not understand global issues, especially the need for data collection.

Unique Program Initiatives

* Find clients through outreach to the community.

– Explore nontraditional ways of finding clients. The most needy clients may never seek out services, so staff [must] undertake proactive means to find these individuals. Outreach includes door-to-door canvassing, outstationing, and involvement of community churches and schools.

– Establish procedures for referrals from outreach to clinical services. Beware of "out of sight, out of mind" and ensure that clients referred for services actually receive those services.

* Recognize the special needs of outreach workers.

– Seek community input when recruiting community outreach workers, but maintain control over the process.

– Recognize that skill levels differ among outreach workers, and plan their training accordingly. These outreach workers face a myriad of problems and environments.

– Coordinate care and integrate job arrangements and support systems for both clients and outreach workers.

– Plan and provide extensive training to certify community workers whenever possible, and encourage them to complete GED training and/or earn degrees.

* Integrating services
  -- Integrate services to reduce cost and expand resources.

  – Offer multiple services at one location to encourage clients to use a variety of available services.

* Involve men
  -- Target programs to both males and females, fathers and mothers. "Dads have babies, too."

  -- Encourage male involvement in a variety of ways; for example, make copies of *Sports Illustrated* available in the waiting room and display pictures on the wall with positive images of men who are supportive of women and their babies.

  -- Require the male partner to participate in one prenatal visit and two well-baby visits during the year.

* Develop and implement incentive programs
  – Conduct public education to connect local health providers to the community and educate residents.

– Develop and maintain a 24-hour hotline.

-- Distribute newsletters to share information (and lessons learned) with all involved with Healthy Start.

-- Provide meals at clinics as an incentive to encourage mothers to come.

-- Provide on-site child care, with age-appropriate activities available.

-- Facilitate and deliver needed services, such as education and family support service, to incarcerated women.

– Focus on adolescents: work within schools, and explore and guide maturing attitudes regarding self-development, self-esteem, and parenting through activities such as poetry writing, theater groups, and peer and focus groups.

-- Sponsor farmers' markets coordinated with WIC services as a way of offering quality, affordable produce.

(Medical) Provider Issues

* Increase provider supply

* Facilitate linkages among provider

* Work with providers

Sustainability

• Establish systems that will help perpetuate the Healthy Start philosophy, even after the program ends.

• Cultivate grassroots organizations so that people will be knit together even after the funding has ended.

Other NCSI Publications

Resource Briefs

- #1 So You Think You Need Some Help? Making Effective Use of Technical Assistance, 1992.
- #2 Charting a Course: Assessing a Community's Strengths and Needs, 1993.
- #3 Who Should Know What: Confidentiality and Information Sharing in Service Integration, 1993.
- #4 Getting to the Bottom Line: State and Community Strategies for Financing Comprehensive Community Service Systems, 1993.
- #5 Getting Started: Planning a Comprehensive Service Initiative, 1994.
- #6 Making it Simpler: Streamlining and Integrating Intake Eligibility, 1993.
- #7 Making a Difference: Moving to Outcome-Based Accountability for Comprehensive Service Reforms, 1994.

Working Papers

- Beyond Buzzwords: Key Principles in Effective Frontline Practice, 1994.
- Steps Along an Uncertain Path: State Initiatives Promoting Comprehensive, Community-Based Reform, 1996.
- Realizing a Vision for Children, Families and Neighborhoods: An Alternative to Other Modest Proposals, 1996.

The above publications are available for $4.00 each prepaid from the Child and Family Policy Center, 218 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1021, Des Moines, IA 50309-4006, Tel: (515) 280-9027, Fax: (515) 244-8997. Iowa orders add 5% state sales tax.

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Guidebook 2*: *Defining the Prize: From Agreed-Upon Outcomes to Results-Based Accountability.*
Describes the manner in which communities can establish measurable goals and how these relate to programmatic strategies and accountability.

Guidebook 3*: *Valuing Diversity and Practicing Inclusion: Core Aspects of Collaborative Work.*
Discusses the importance of recognizing differences and placing issues of race, class, and culture on the table.

Guidebook 4: *Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Constructing Effective Services and Supports.*
Outlines the different changes needed in health, education, and human service systems, including the development of new proventive systems.

Guidebook 5*: *Creating Opportunity: Making the Link to Housing, Jobs, and Economic Development.*
Discusses how service collaborations can contribute to addressing neighborhood and community economic needs.

Guidebook 6*: *Getting to the Grassroots: Neighborhood Organizing and Mobilization.*
Describes the steps that service collaborations must take to connect with neighborhood resources, reach out to individuals, and include neighborhood voices in all aspects of reform.

Guidebook 7: *From Recipient to Contributor: Parent and Youth Involvement in Decision-Making and Service Delivery.*
Describes how to engage youth and families at both the service delivery and the policy development levels.

Guidebook 8: *Gaining and Exercising Authority: Building Local Decision-Making and Governance Structures.*
Examines different approaches to creating decision-making structures at the community level which are sustainable, representative, legitimate, and capable of marshalling resources across systems to achieve agreed-upon goals.

Guidebook 9: *Rethinking Financing: Moving From Funding Silos and Toward Investment-Based Budgeting.*
Describes strategies to ensure financing systems are linked to reform goals and accountable to achieving desired results for children, families, and neighborhoods.

Guidebook 10: *The Road to Success: Building the Capacity to Manage Change.*
Describes investments in leadership development and organizational change strategies that can create the capacity to implement reforms.

Guidebook 11: *Delivering on the Vision: Tools and Strategies for Frontline Professional Development.*
Describes approaches for building the skills and qualities needed for changing worker roles at the frontline and supervisory levels.

Guidebook 12: *Building Public Will and Commitment to Sustain the Work.*
Describes ways to build broad public understanding and support.

Guidebook 13*: *Learning from Doing: Continuous Evaluation and Quality Improvement.*
Introduces approaches to evaluation that recognize the path-breaking work community collaborations undertake.

Guidebook 14: *Going to Scale: Broadening and Deepening the Commitment to Success.*
Describes the importance and challenge of extending beyond demonstration efforts to changed systems of services and supports.

* *Guidebooks currently published and available*